

Fruits Basket

The #1 selling
shojo manga
in America!



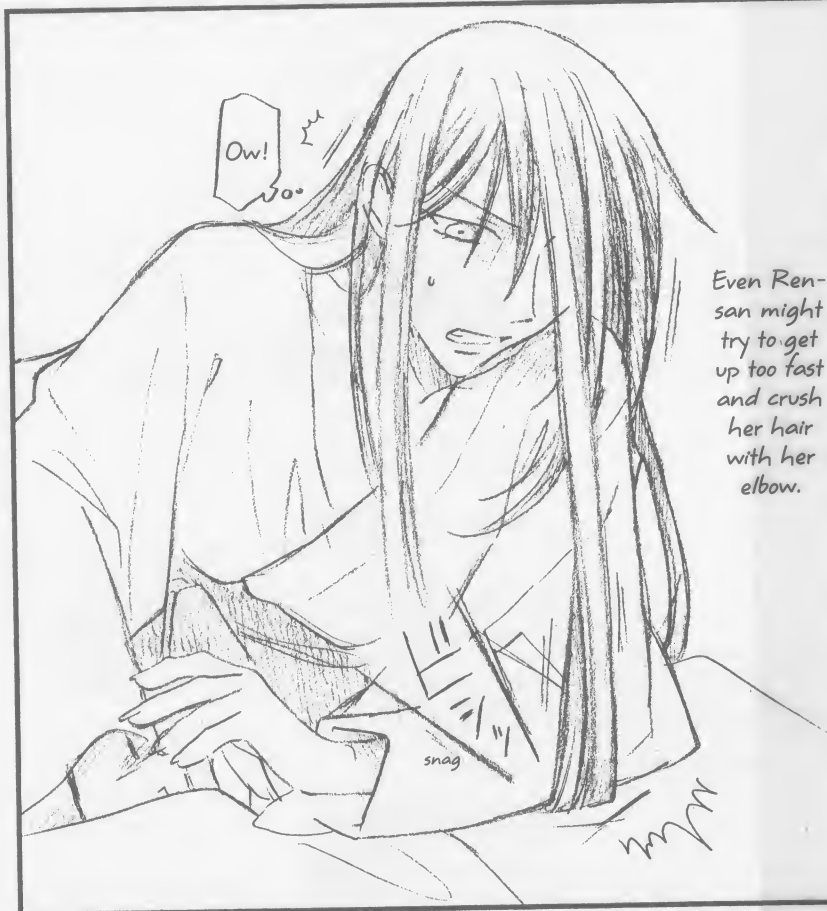
21

Natsuki Takaya

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Fruits Basket™

Volume 21



Even Ren-san might try to get up too fast and crush her hair with her elbow.

Natsuki Takaya

Fruits Basket™

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STORY SO FAR...

Hello, I'm Tohru Honda, and I have come to know a terrible secret. After the death of my mother, I was living by myself in a tent, when the Sohma family took me in. I soon learned that the Sohma family lives with a curse! Each family member is possessed by the vengeful spirit of an animal from the Chinese Zodiac. Whenever one of them becomes weak or is hugged by a member of the opposite sex, that person changes into his or her Zodiac animal!



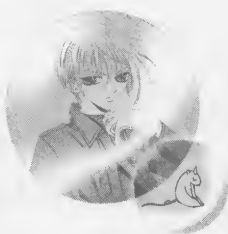


Tohru Honda

The ever-optimistic heroine of our story. An orphan, she now lives in Shigure's house, along with Yuki and Kyo, and is the only person outside of the family who knows the Sohma family's curse.

Yuki Sohma, the Rat

Soft-spoken. Self-esteem issues. At school, he's called "Prince Yuki."

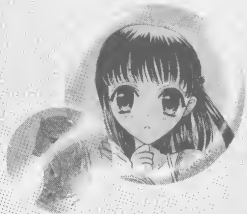


Kyo Sohma, the Cat

The Cat who was left out of the Zodiac. Hates Yuki, leeks and miso. But mostly Yuki.

Kagura Sohma, the Boar

Bashful, yet headstrong. Determined to marry Kyo, even if it kills him.



Fruits Basket Characters

Mabudachi Trio



Shigure Sohma, the Dog

Enigmatic, mischievous and a little perverted. A popular novelist.

Hatori Sohma, the Dragon

Family doctor to the Sohmas. Only thing he can't cure is his broken heart.



Ayame Sohma, the Snake

Yuki's older brother. A proud and playful drama queen...er, king. Runs a costume shop.

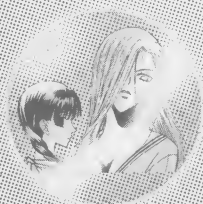


Saki Hanajima

"Hana-chan." Can sense people's "waves." Goth demeanor scares her classmates.

Arisa Uotani

"Uo-chan." A tough-talking "Yankee" who looks out for her friends.



Tobru's Best Friends



Hiro Sohma, the Ram (or sheep)

This caustic tyke is skilled at throwing verbal barbs, but he has a soft spot for Kisa.

Momiji Sohma, the Rabbit

Half German. He's older than he looks. His mother rejected him because of the Sohma curse. His little sister, Momo, has been kept from him most of her life.



Hatsuharu Sohma, the Ox

The nicest of guys, except when he goes "Black." Then you'd better watch out. He was once in a relationship with Rin.

Kisa Sohma, the Tiger

Kisa became shy and self-conscious due to constant teasing by her classmates. Yuki, who has similar insecurities, feels particularly close to Kisa.



Fruits Basket Characters

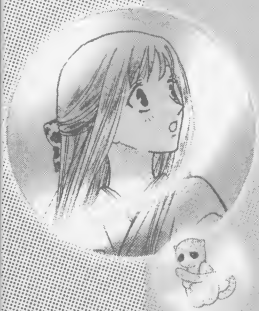
Isuzu "Rin" Sohma, the Horse

She was once in a relationship with Hatsuharu (Haru)...and Tohru leaves her rather cold. Rin is full of pride, and she can't stand the amount of deference the other Sohma family members give Akito.



Ritsu Sohma, the Monkey

This shy, kimono-wearing member of the Sohma family is gorgeous. But this "she" is really a he!! Cross-dressing calms his nerves.



Kureno Sohma, the Rooster (or bird)

He is Akito's very favorite, and spends almost all of his time on the Sohma estate, tending to Akito's every desire. Kureno was born possessed by the spirit of the Bird, but his curse broke long ago...which means we've never seen him transformed. He pities Akito's loneliness, and can't bring himself to leave her.



Akito Sohma

The head of the Sohma clan. A dark figure of many secrets. Treated with fear and reverence. It has recently been revealed that Akito is actually a woman!



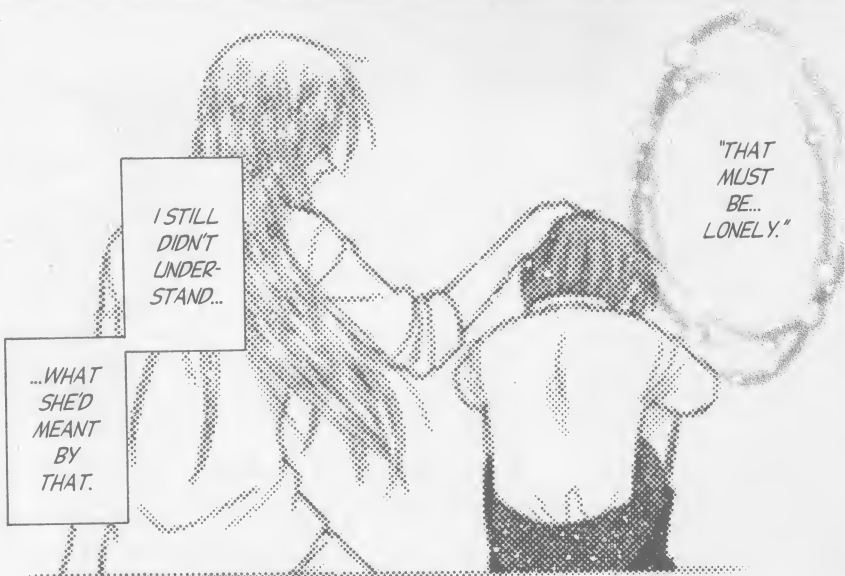




Chapter 120

Fruits Basket





"THAT
MUST
BE...
LONELY."

I STILL
DIDN'T
UNDER-
STAND...

...WHAT
SHE'D
MEANT
BY
THAT.



STILL.

MAYBE
THAT'S
NOT
WHAT
YOU
MEANT.

I MET
SOME...

...WEIRD
LADY.

...HAD
FOR-
GIVEN
MY
EXIS-
TENCE.

BUT IT
FELT LIKE
I'D BEEN
FORGIVEN.

A COM-
PLETE
STRANG-
ER...

YOU'LL
JUST
HAVE TO
GO SEE
HER AGAIN,
WON'T
YOU?

I MEAN,
SHE
WASN'T
BAD OR
ANYTHING.

SHE
WAS
JUST
WEIRD.

'WEIRD'?

I ALWAYS
THOUGHT...

...SHISHOU WAS
THE ONLY PERSON
LIKE THAT.

EVEN
THOUGH
SHE'S NOT
EVEN MY
FRIEND OR
ANYTHING.

SHE
TOLD
ME...

...TO
GO
SEE
HER
AGAIN.

EVEN
THOUGH
I KNOW
THAT
SOUNDS
WEIRD.

WELL,
THEN.

SO TO
ME, SHE
SEEMED...
LIKE
HOPE.

LIKE
LIGHT.



BUT MY MOM WAS
ALWAYS STARING AT
ME SUSPICIOUSLY.

MY FATHER
WAS ALWAYS
SPITTING HATE.

AND EVERYONE ELSE
IN THE SOHMA FAMILY
LOOKED DOWN ON ME.

BUT I
ONLY
THOUGHT
ABOUT IT.

HONESTLY...

AND
WHEN I
ACTUALLY
WENT TO
SEE HER...

...I DID
WANNA
MEET
TOHRI!

I'D BEEN
REJECTED
BY EVERYONE
MY ENTIRE
LIFE.

I WANTED HER
TO BE HAPPY.

I REALLY DID.

I WANTED THE DAYS
THAT LADY AND THAT
GIRL SPENT TOGETHER...



...TO BE
PROTECTED BY
HAPPINESS.

SHE
LOOKED
SO
LONELY.

...THAT
ONE
DAY.

IT
WAS
ONLY...

THAT
ONE
TIME

I HATED
THAT.

Fruits Basket

Nice to meet you and hello. I'm Takaya, presenting Furuba Volume 21. The cover this time is Ren-san. Actually, Furuba ended up being one volume longer than I anticipated, and that meant there would have to be one more cover model than planned. "Oh, no!" I thought. "Who should it be?" I couldn't decide even up until Volume 20 came out, and I worried and worried, and then I ended up with Ren-san. So now you know. The truth is, there's a character other than Ren-san I wanted to put on a cover... " (I'm sorry, Ren-san.) But thinking about it reasonably, it really should be Ren-san. Somehow, the "uniform cover project" (although it's not so great as to be called that) that I wished for since Volume 1 looks like it will be a success. (laugh) Now then, please enjoy Volume 21.

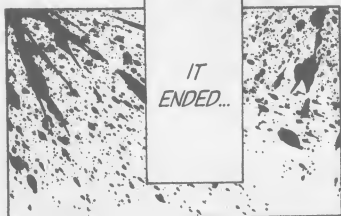


IT WAS
LIKE
SOMETHING
BLOS-
SOMED...





AND
EVEN
WHEN
I SAW
HER
AGAIN.



IT
ENDED...



...LIKE
THAT.

SHE
SAID...

...SHE
WOULDN'T...
FORGIVE
ME.

...AFTER
WHAT
HAPPENED...



...IT
ENDED.



IT
BOTH-
ERED
ME A
LOT.

ENOUGH
THAT,
FOR THE
FIRST
TIME...



...I WENT TO
SEE HER.



BUT
THAT
DAY...





...“I
WON’T
FORGIVE
YOU.”

SHE
TOLD
ME...

YOUR
MOM...

...FROM
THE
POOL OF
BLOOD.

SHE
SAW ME
STANDING
THERE.



I KNOW
IT.



I KNOW
THAT’S
WHAT I
HEARD
HER SAY.

“...WON’T...FORGIVE...”

I...

...ALL
JUM-
BLED UP
INSIDE
ME.

EVERY-
THING
GOT...

THE
INSIDE OF
MY HEAD
WENT
BLANK.

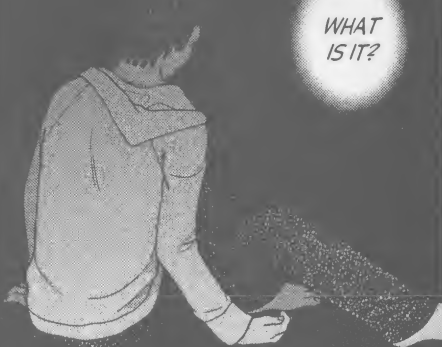
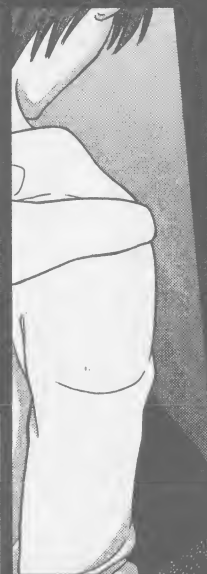
I COULD-
N'T...

...DO
ANY-
THING.

I JUST
STARTED
RUNNING.

KYO...

I JUST
...



WHAT
IS IT?

WHAT
HAPPENED?



AND
JUST
LIKE
THAT
...

SHISHOU
TOOK ME
AWAY.

WE
LEFT
THERE...



...TO LIVE
IN THE
MOUN-
TAINS.



BUT IT
DIDN'T
MATTER.

...TRIED
TO
REVIVE
ME.

NO
MATTER
WHAT I
DID...

...I COULDN'T
FORGIVE
MYSELF.

I
JUST...
STOPPED.

I WAS
TRAPPED
IN THE
DARK AND
COULDN'T
MOVE.

SHISHOU
...

"IN-
STEAD..."

"...HE WENT
MISSING
FOR FOUR
MONTHS."

"HE'S BEEN
TRAINING IN
THE MOLIN-
TAINS."

YEAH.

I SURE
AS HELL
WASN'T
TRAINING
UP
THERE.




"IT'S
NOT."

"IT'S
HIS."

"THIS
IS ALL
YUKI'S
FAULT."



"IT'S
NOT MY
FAULT."



"MY
HOPE,
ALL OF
IT, HE..."

"...THAT
STUPID
RAT
STOLE IT."



NOTHING
WORKED.

I FELT
LIKE THE
ONLY
THING
LEFT
TO DO...

...WAS
DIE
LIKE
SHE
HAD.

SO
THEN...

I MADE
UP SOME
SORT OF
BAD GUY.

AND I
SHOVED
ALL THE
RESPON-
SIBILITY
ONTO HIM.

I TOLD
MYSELF
IT WAS
YUKI'S
FAULT.

I...

EVERYTHING
I DIDN'T LIKE
COULD BE
HIS FAULT...

...AND I
COULD
PRETEND
THAT I'D
FORGOTTEN.

I DIDN'T
HAVE
ANYTHING
TO BASE
IT ON.

I DIDN'T
NEED
THAT.

I JUST
NEEDED
HIM TO
BE THE
BAD GUY
FOR ME.



I HAD
TO.

I HAD
TO KEEP
HATING
HIM.

...DONE
THAT
SINCE
I WAS
A KID,
REALLY.

I'VE...

I JUST
SHIFTED
THE
BLAME.


I
COULDN'T
BELIEVE
HOW
MUCH
BETTER
I FELT.

IT WAS
SO...
SIMPLE.



PROTECTING
MYSELF IS
THE ONE
THING I'M
GOOD AT.

AREN'T I
HORRIBLE?



I CHEERED
UP ENOUGH
TO LEAVE
THE MOUNTAIN
AFTER
THAT.

SO I
DID.



I DECIDED
TO LIVE
OFF MY
HATRED.


SHISHOU
...

...SMILED
SO SADLY
AT ME.



WE
FOUGHT
FOR A
WHILE.

AND
THEN
WE
MADE
A BET.



HE
CALLED
ME IN AND
REALLY
LET ME
HAVE IT.



WHEN
I GOT
BACK...

...MY
FATHER
HAD TOLD
AKITO THAT
I'D GONE
MISSING.



MAYBE...

...DEEP
DOWN,
I WAS
REALLY
HAPPY.

TO BE
TOLD
THAT,
I MEAN.


NOT BECAUSE
IT MEANT I
COULD JOIN
THE ZODIAC.

...
ALL
THAT
...

AFTER
...

...I WENT
STRAIGHT
FOR HIM.

THAT
WAS
WHY...




"IF YOU REALLY
CAN BEAT YUKI
BY THE TIME
YOU GRADUATE
HIGH SCHOOL...

...I'LL STOP
CALLING YOU
A MONSTER."



"I'LL EVEN
LET YOU
JOIN THE
ZODIAC."



BUT BECAUSE I
HAD ANOTHER
REASON TO
HATE YUKI.



I NEVER
THOUGHT...

...I'D
ACTUALLY
MEET YOU.



THAT'S
TOHRU
HONDA-SAN.



WHAT?

DO YOU
THINK...

...YOU
COULD
EVER
FORGIVE
ME?

...YOU
WON'T
LET ME
FORGET?

WHY
IS SHE
HERE?

WHY?!

I THOUGHT
I COULD
FINALLY
FORGET
ALL THAT.

FOR
RUNNING
AWAY.

FOR
ALWAYS
RUNNING
AWAY.

DO...

FOR
PRETEND-
ING I
DIDN'T
REALIZE...

...WHEN
I MET
YOU.

ARE YOU
TRYING TO
TELL ME...



*I DIDN'T
MEAN TO.*

I...

*...CAN'T EVEN
FORGIVE
MYSELF.*



*I DIDN'T
MEAN...*

*...TO
FALL
IN LOVE
WITH
YOU.*



*FOR NOT
SAYING
ANYTHING.*

*I WAS
ANGRY.*

*AND
AFRAID.*

*I DIDN'T
MEAN...*

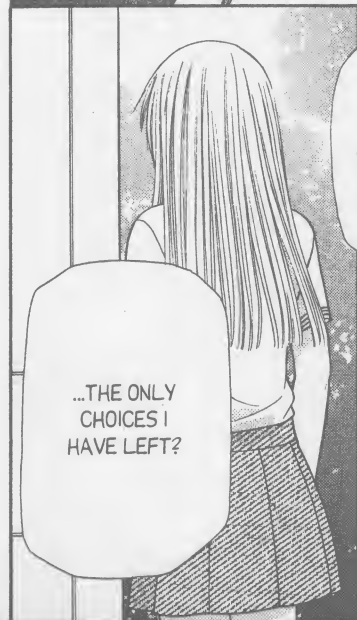
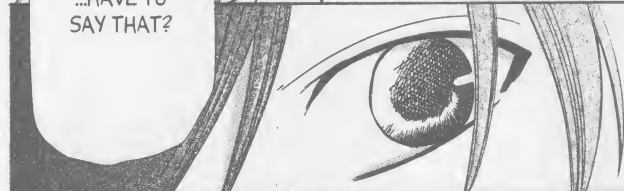
*...TO GET
SO DEEPLY
INVOLVED.*





DO I...

...HAVE TO
SAY THAT?



ARE
THOSE...

...THE ONLY
CHOICES I
HAVE LEFT?



NOT
FORGIVING
YOU...



...OR
FORGIVING
YOU.

IS THAT IT?



THEN I

...

I...

I JUST...



...
BELIEVE
THAT.

BUT...

I
CAN'T...

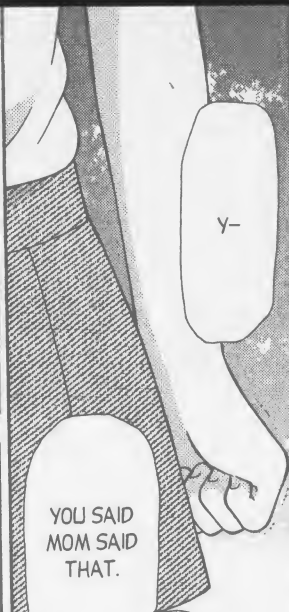


...SAY
THAT...

BUT
IF...

...SHE
REALLY
DID...

IF...



y-

YOU SAID
MOM SAID
THAT.

"I WON'T
FORGIVE
YOU."

BUT SHE
WOULDN'T.

I CAN'T
BELIEVE SHE
WOULD SAY
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT!



I HAVE NO
CHOICE.

I HAVE TO GO
AGAINST MY
MOTHER!



WHY CAN'T
YOU JUST
ACCEPT
THAT?!

OKAY?!

EVEN WITH
ALL THAT.

NO MATTER
WHAT
HAPPENS...

...I LOVE
YOU,
KYO-KUN!



I'M DISILLU-
SIONED.

...

...

NOW
...



YOU
STUPID
...

...BE DISILLU-
SIONED.



KYO!



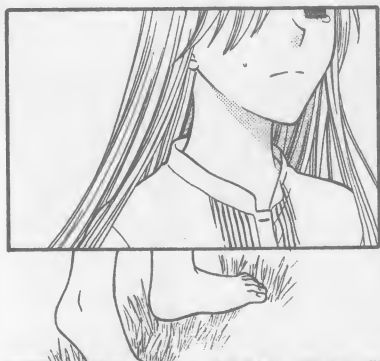
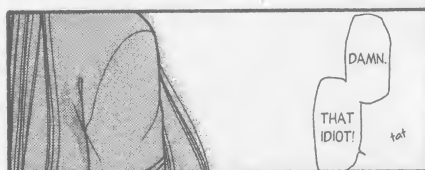
KYO?!



WAIT!



AND I
WON'T...





*...I EVER
DID...*

*...WERE FOR
MYSELF.*



*I ONLY
CARED
ABOUT
MY OWN
PENANCE.*



*I ONLY
SAID WHAT
I WANTED
TO SAY.*



AND THROUGH
EVERYTHING...



...I'VE
IGNORED
YOUR
FEELINGS.



...TO
APOLOGIZE...

...TO
SOMEONE.

I KNEW THAT,
BUT...

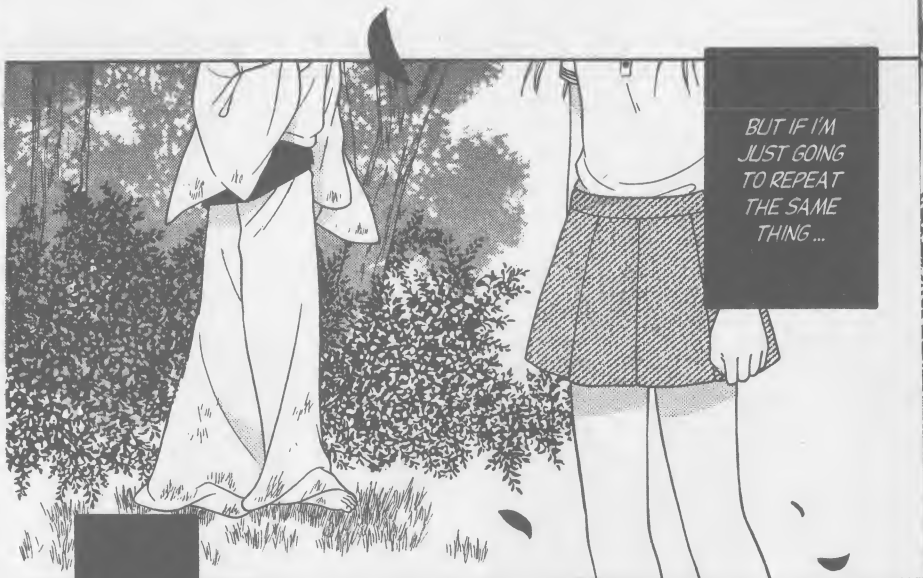


AND
SOME-
TIMES...



...YOU
NEVER...

...GET
THE
CHANCE...



BUT IF I'M
JUST GOING
TO REPEAT
THE SAME
THING...

HOW'S
THAT...



...ANY DIFFERENT...

...THAN NOT KNOWING AT ALL?

Filler Sketch







Filler Sketch





I
LET
HER
DIE

...IT WOULD
BE HEART-
BREAKING.

I KNEW
THAT IF
THAT WERE
TRUE...





...ORANGE
HAIR.

I SAW
HIS EYES
SHINE.

BUT WHEN
HE SAID
THAT...

"TERRIBLY
SAD."

EVEN
MORE
THAN
THAT.

THROUGH
AN
OPENING...

"I'M
SAD."

...IN
HIS...

THOSE EYES
SPOKE TO ME.

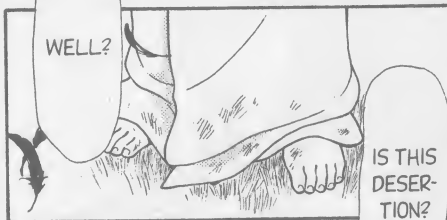


ARE
YOU...

...ABANDONING
ME?



WELL?



IS THIS
DESER-
TION?



THAT
WAS THE
SADDEST
THING OF
ALL.

AND THE
MOST
ENDEARING.

EVEN MORE
THAN MY MOM.





Ren-san



If I had to describe my strongest memory of Ren-san, it would be "my fingers hurt like crazy" (from inking).

- The composition of her family before she came to the Sohma is unknown.
- Her age isn't clarified.
- I wanted to give the impression that her true identity is unknown.
- An impression like... she's not really human, she's a "spirit."
- Still, I also kinda wish I could have drawn her showing more of a backbone.
- But there's really no end to it, I held back.
- Akito takes after Ren-san. looks-wise.



I WAS DRINKING. WITH MY WRITER FRIENDS!

Eh
heh
heh...

HEY, ON YOUR WAY HERE, DID YOU...

YOU REEK OF ALCOHOL!



DID YOU SEE THAT IDIOT?

ON YOUR WAY HERE! THE IDIOT!

IDIOT?



EASE UP ON THAT SORT OF THING, WILL YOU? YOU'RE LIKE OUR GUARDIAN, AND THAT'S REALLY--

UNTIL I COULD CATCH THE FIRST TRAIN, YEAH.

DRINKING? UNTIL NOW?!

gasp

NO, YOU'RE NOT IMPORTANT!

OUCH.



WHY IS HE
MAKING HER
CRY?!



OH, THE
IDIOT.

SORRY;
HAVEN'T
SEEN HIM.

DID HE GO
THE OTHER
WAY?!

Took a
gamble as to
whether he
went right
or left--
and lost.



DID KYO-
KUN DO
SOMETHING?

WELL,
I DON'T
REALLY
KNOW THE
DETAILS.



BUT
HE'S SO
STUPID!



YOU
WIN.

YOU'VE
COM-
PLETELY
STOLEN...

...THE
PLACE
WHERE I
BELONG.



YOU'VE
MADE
ME THE
OUTSIDER.



AND
EVERYONE
LOVES YOU.

DO YOU
LIKE
THAT?

THE
LONELI-
NESS...



ARE
YOU
HAPPY
NOW?

THE
FEELING...

...OF BEING
LEFT
BEHIND.



*...OF BEING
LEFT BEHIND.*

THANKS
TO YOU...

...

...I'M ALL
ALONE.

I'M THE
MISTAKE.

DO YOU
LIKE
THAT?!

THE BAD
GUY.



YOU
JUST...

YOU
DESTROY
OTHER
PEOPLE'S
WORLDS.

I CAN
SEE IT.

BUT YOU STILL
STAY AS THIS
CLEAN AND
BEAUTIFUL
EXISTENCE.

OH.

FINALLY.

YOU'RE
THE DIRTY
ONE HERE!

I HATE
YOU!

I HATE
YOU.

AKITO-
SAN.



YOU WERE
THERE.

THE
WHOLE
TIME.
WEREN'T
YOU?



STAY
BACK!

GET AWAY
FROM ME!
YOU MAKE
ME SICK!

I DIDN'T
REALIZE.

slice

.....
?!

ST--

*SINCE YOU
WERE BORN...*

*...YOU WERE
TREATED AS
"SPECIAL."*

*A BEING WHO
WASN'T PART
OF A CIRCLE,
BUT STANDING
ABOVE IT.*



*YOU TREATED
OTHERS LIKE
THAT WAS
THE TRUTH...*

*...AND THEY
TREATED YOU
BACK THE
SAME WAY.*

*I SEE
NOW.*

YOU'VE
BEEN...

...LONELY.

BUT YOU
WERE
ACTING
STRONG.

FROM
THE
BEGIN-
NING.

I WAS SO
THOUGHT-
LESS.

I HATE
IT.

AKITO-
SAN...

GET
BACK!

ALWAYS.



THAT'S NO
DIFFERENT...

...FROM
BEING LEFT
BEHIND.

ETERNITY
AND...
PERMAN-
ENCE.


AKITO-
SAN.

YOU
TALKED
ABOUT
THOSE
THINGS.

YOU KEPT
REPEATING
THEM.

...YOU WERE
SCARED
NOT TO.

IT WAS
BECAUSE...



YOU
WERE SO
SCARED...

...YOU
COULDN'T
STOP!

Whap!



SHUT
UP!

DO YOU
THINK
YOU'RE
BETTER
THAN ME?!

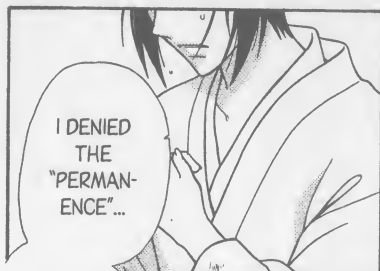
I WON'T
FALL
FOR YOUR
CRAP!

YOU WON'T
WIN ME
OVER!

!...
!...

JUST
SHUT
YOUR--

YOU
DON'T
KNOW ME!



I DENIED
THE
"PERMAN-
ENCE"...

...THAT
YOU'VE
BEEN
WISHING
FOR.

BUT THE
TRUTH
IS...



...I WAS
WISHING
FOR IT,
TOO.

FOR
"PERMAN-
ENCE."



I'M
DIRTY.

I'M...

...JUST
LIKE YOU
SAY I AM,
AKITO-SAN.



FOR
UNCHANGING
FEELINGS.



FOR
BONDS.

"WE'LL ALWAYS
BE TOGETHER."



I WAS
SO, SO
TROUBLED
BY IT.

AND HE TOLD
ME THAT HE'S
DISILLUSIONED.

BUT I
LOVE
HIM.

IF
CONTINUING
TO
CHANGE...

...IS A
PART OF
LIFE...

HOW
CRUEL...

HOW CRUEL
THAT
KINDNESS IS.

BUT...!

M
O
M
...

I'VE...

I'VE FALLEN
IN LOVE.

FEEL-
INGS...

THEY
CAN'T BE
TIED UP.

MOM.

I'M...

EVEN IF MY
FEELINGS END UP
UNFULFILLED.

I WON'T
LET ANY-
THING...

HAVEN'T
YOU?

AKITO-
SAN.

I'M SURE
YOU'VE
REALIZED
THAT.

...GOING.


...STOP ME
ANYMORE.

...AN
AWFUL
THOUGHT.

IT'S
SUCH...

I
KNOW.

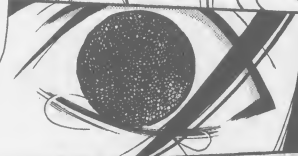
PEOPLE.



AND
PAINFUL.

IT'S
SAD.

AND
LONELY.
ISN'T IT?





NO!

NO!
DON'T...

I DON'T
WANT TO
BE LEFT
BEHIND!

WHY?!

I'M
SCARED!
I HATE
THIS!

AKI--

I HATE
THIS!

I DON'T
WANT A
WORLD
LIKE THIS!



I HATE THIS.

NO ONE NEEDS ME.

THIS WORLD...



IT'S NOT
EVEN MY
FAULT!

I HATE
THIS!

...IS FILLED
WITH
STRANGERS.

NOW.

NOW
I SEE
IT!

AKITO-
SAN!

I'M...
SCARED.

AND I
HATE IT.

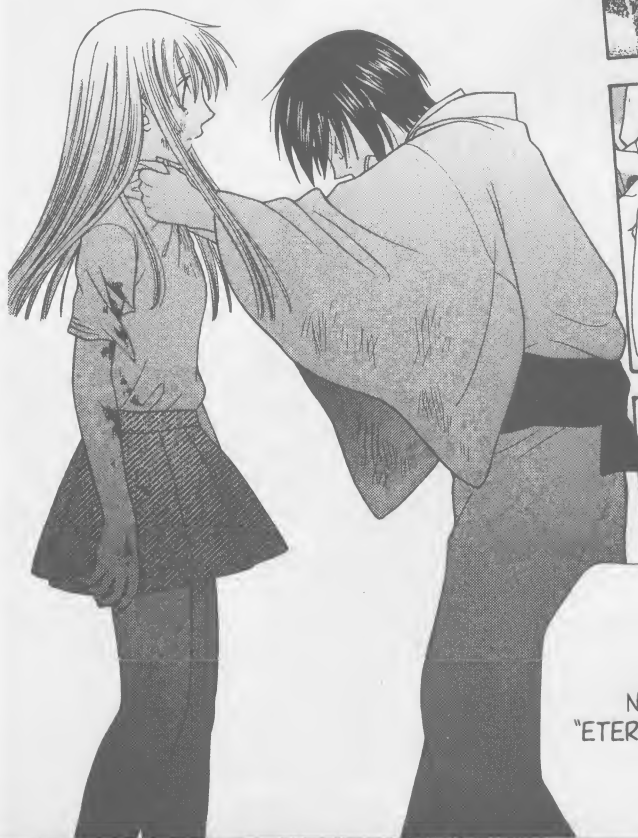
I CAN'T
LIVE IN A
WORLD
LIKE THIS
NOW.

LIVING
WITH
THEM?

WITH
STRAN-
GERS?

WITH NO
"PROMISE,"
NO "BOND"...

NO
"ETERNITY"?





I CAN'T
LIVE
LIKE
THAT.

I'M
SCARED!

SURROUNDED
BY STRANGERS.

*I'M
AFRAID
OF THE
WORLD.*

I HAVE NO
GUARANTEE...

I
CAN'T!

THEN...

...THAT
ANYONE
WILL
LOVE ME.





I WANT
THE TWO
OF US...

...TO BECOME
FRIENDS.

STOP
TALKING
LIKE
THAT!

SHUT
YOUR
MOUTH.

LIAR!



YOU'LL GET
MAD AS
SOON AS I
COMPLAIN.

IF I
START
CRYING,
YOU'LL
JUST...

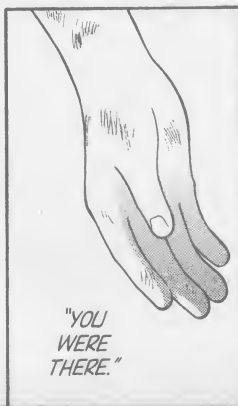
...GET
IRRITATED
WITH ME.

YOU'LL
HATE
ME.

YOU'LL
ABANDON
ME!

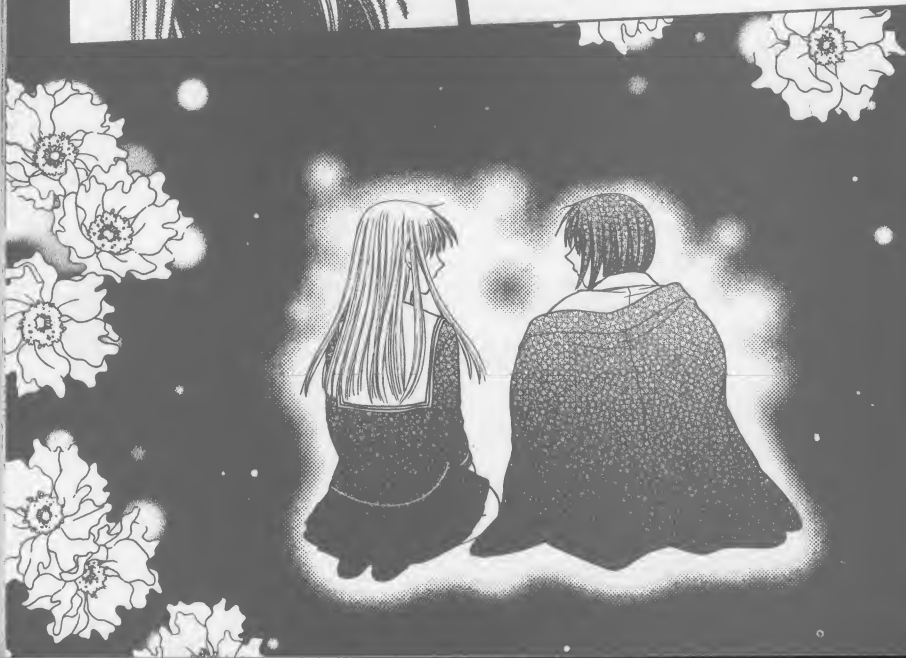


"THE WHOLE TIME.
WEREN'T YOU?"



"YOU
WERE
THERE."









"OKAY?"



*"...TO BECOME
FRIENDS."*

*"WHAT'S YOUR
NAME?"*

AH...!

AH...!

AH...!

*"I WANT THE
TWO OF US..."*



Chapter 122



*"I WANT THE
TWO OF US..."*

*"...TO BECOME
FRIENDS."*

AH
!

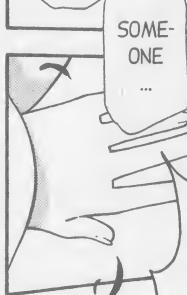
NN
...

DON'T...

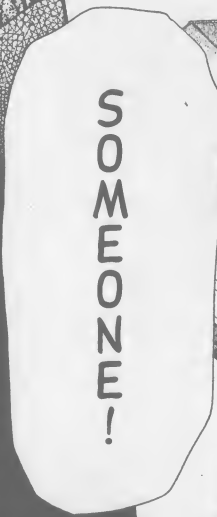
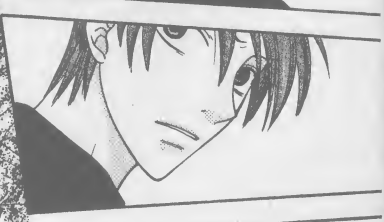
SOME...

CRY
ANYMORE

S
O
M
E
T
H
I
N
G
S
Y
O
U
!



IS
ANYONE
OUT
THERE?!



HELP...!

DON'T
CRY.

SOME-
BODY!

PLEASE
DON'T CRY...

...WHEN YOU'RE
ALONE.

...IS
ALL...

IT'S OKAY.
THE SCARY
PART...

IT'S
OKAY.

HELP...!



...OVER.



...
WHOA.

YOU
STARTLED
ME.



...
GURE
...


SH-
SHI
...

H--



AND
SHE'S
NOT
MOVING!

SHE'S
JUST...




WHAT DO
WE DO?
SHE'S NOT
MOVING.
HELP HER!



SH-SHE'S
NOT MOVING!

AKITO.

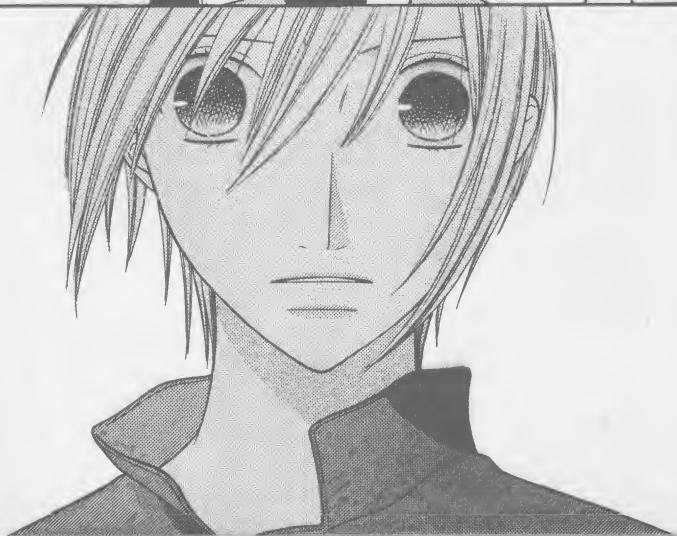
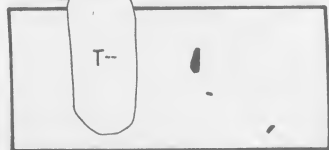


HELP.
P-PLEASE.

SHE
FELL!

FROM
...

FROM
THE
CLIFF!





SHIGURE,
I--

DID YOU
PUSH HER,
AKITO?

I DIDN'T!



I
STABBED
KURENO.

THAT
WAS
ME.

.....

BUT...

I
DON'T
KNOW!

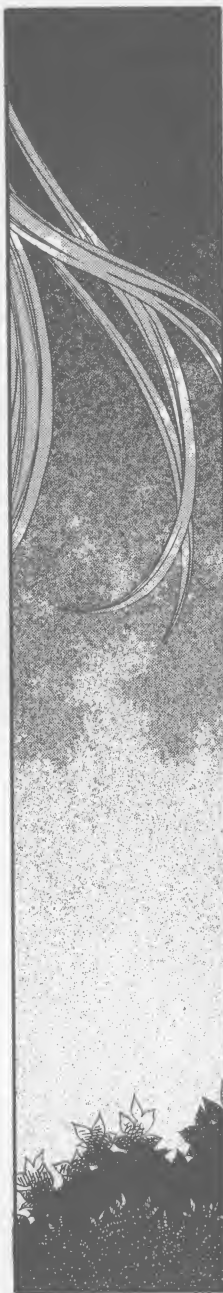
THE
GROUND,
IT
JUST...

BUT...

...
CRUM-
BLED.

AND
SUD-
DENLY
...

S
H-I
GURE!





HELLO?



IS THAT
YOU,
HATORI?

IT'S
ME.

...
YEAH.



AKITO'S
OVER
HERE.

YEAH,
AT MY
PLACE.

DID
SOMETHING
HAPPEN AT
THE MAIN
HOUSE?



NO,
THAT'S
...

HOLD
ON.



!

REALLY.



I HEARD.

HOW
IS HE?



SHE FELL
FROM A
CLIFF,
APPARENTLY.



RIGHT.



IT'S
TOHRU-
KUN.



NO,
AKITO'S
FINE.

THINGS
ARE
PRETTY
NUTS
OVER
HERE,
TOO.



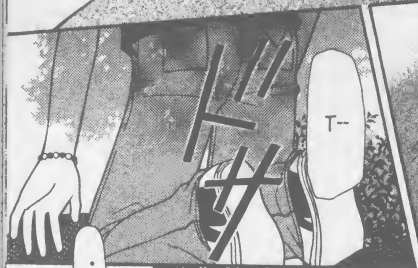
I FOUND
OUT
ABOUT
KURENO.

FOR
THE
TIME
BEING
...

...HE'S
FINE.







T--

TOHRU...





DON'T,
OKAY?

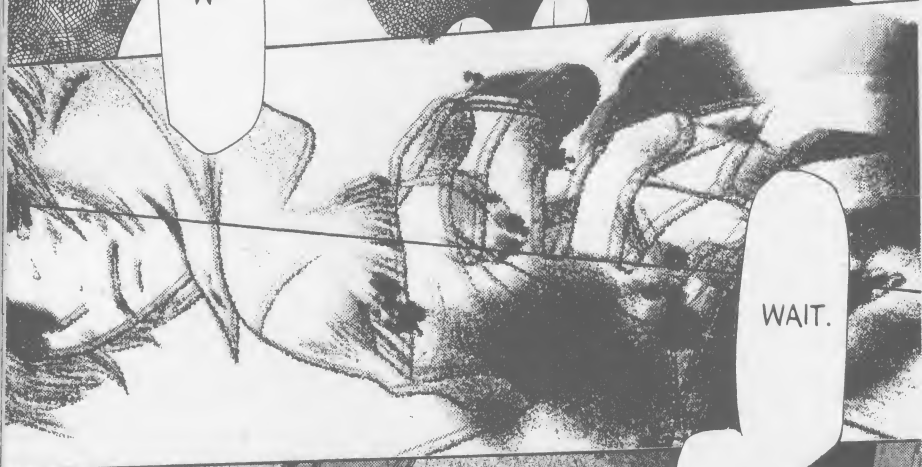
I
THINK...

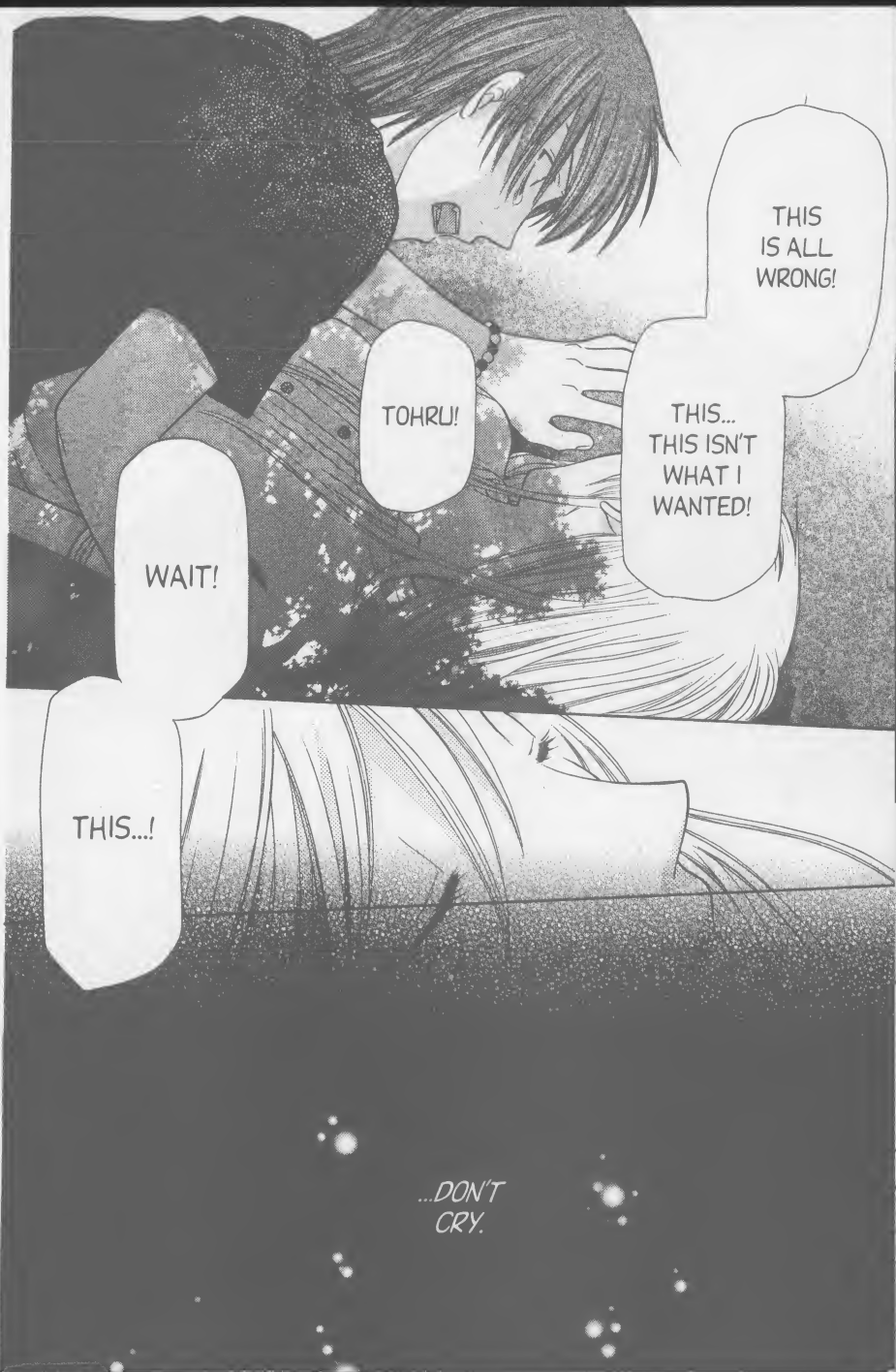
...SHE HIT
HER HEAD
PRETTY
HARD.



DON'T
TOUCH
HER.







THIS
IS ALL
WRONG!

TOHRU!

THIS...
THIS ISN'T
WHAT I
WANTED!

WAIT!

THIS...!

...DON'T
CRY.

THE
PERSON
I LOVE SO
DEEPLY.

I HAVE
TO...

...CHASE
AFTER
KYO-KUN.

DON'T CRY
ANYMORE.

WHO'S
CRYING?

KYO-KUN?

I HAVE
TO
TELL
HIM.

AKITO-SAN?

I'M
GLAD...

I HAVE
TO.

...I MET
YOU.

OH.



IT
MADE ME
HAPPY.

YOUR
AWKWARD
KINDNESS.

IT MAY HAVE
BEEN NOTHING
BUT PAINFUL
FOR YOU,
KYO-KLIN.

BUT I
REALLY
AM...



AND
YOUR
EMBAR-
RASSED
FACE.

THEY
MADE
ME SO
HAPPY.



YOUR
SMILING
FACE.



SO MUCH
THAT
LITTLE
BY
LITTLE...

...THAT
HAPPINESS
BECAME
TENDER-
NESS.

MORE
THAN
ANYTHING...



...HAPPY TO HAVE
MET YOU.



...I'D FALLEN
IN LOVE
WITH YOU,
KYO-KLIN.

...THAT DAY
I CHASED
AFTER YOU
SO DESPER-
ATELY...

IT WAS
BECAUSE
...

THAT'S
WHY I
DIDN'T
WANT YOU
TO LEAVE

I
LOVE
YOU.

BUT
STILL...

MAYBE
THEY...
HURT YOU.

KYO-KLIN.

BEING
NEAR YOU.

MY
FEELINGS.

EVEN IF
YOU CAN'T
ALWAYS
BELIEVE
THAT...

BUT THINGS
THAT ARE
SCARY AND
SAD...

...COME
TO AN END
TOO

...PLEASE
DON'T
GIVE UP

I KNOW
THAT
HAPPY
THINGS...

THEY
ALWAYS
DO

...AND FUN
THINGS...

LIVE

...EVEN
THAT WILL
COME
TO AN END

...PLEASE DON'T
CRY ANYMORE.





AT LEAST
DON'T GIVE
UP ON
THAT

DON'T GIVE UP
ON PUSHING
FORWARD

I WANT
YOU TO
LIVE

EVEN IF YOU MAKE
A MISTAKE

EVEN IF YOU TAKE
THE LONG WAY,
IT'S STILL OKAY

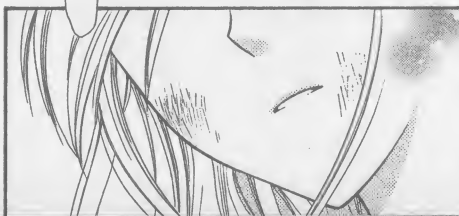
EVEN IF
I'M NOT...

JUST
PLEASE...

PLEASE.

...BY YOUR SIDE...

PLEASE
LIVE





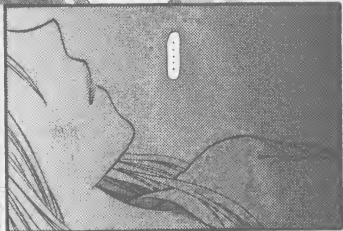
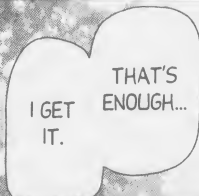
IT'S...

IT'S...

...OKAY.

...OKAY.





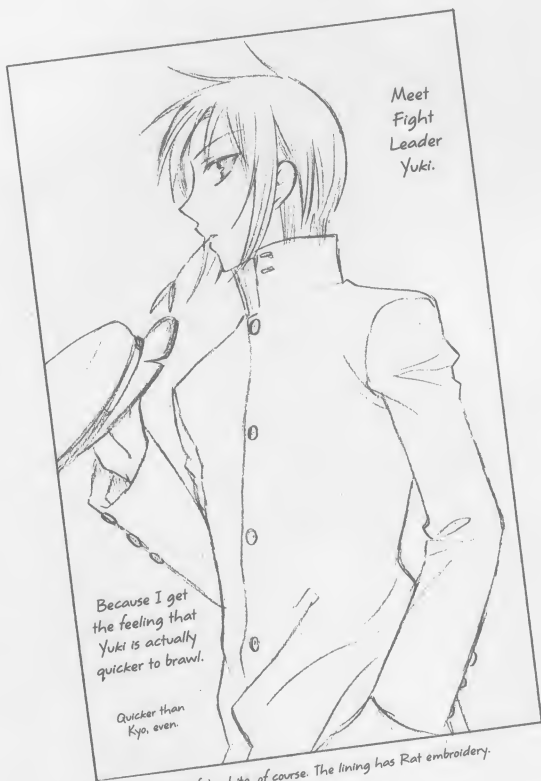


REACH
HIM.



Chapter 123

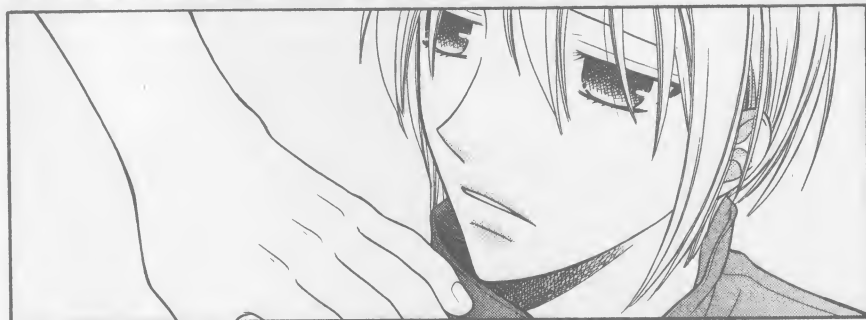
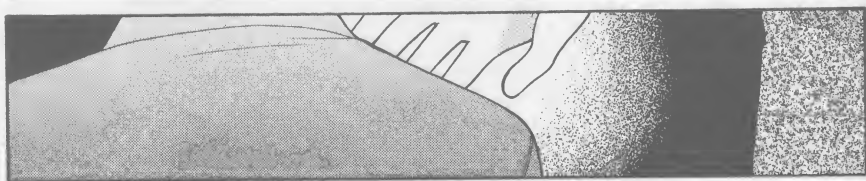
Filler Sketch

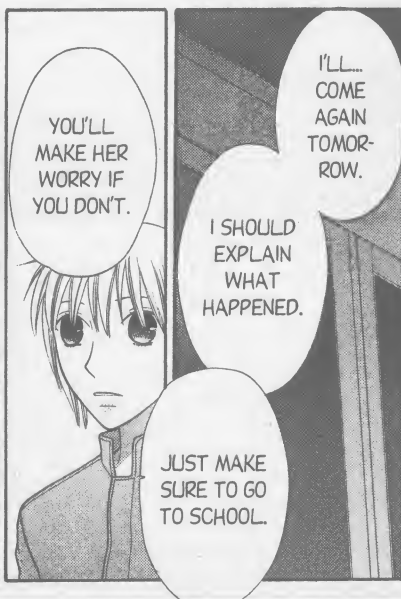




*I WISH I
COULDVE
LIVED MY
LIFE...*

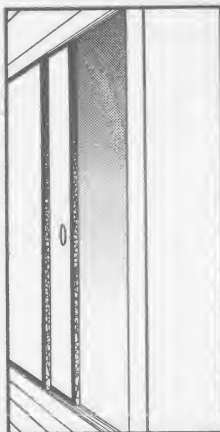
*...WITHOUT
MAKING
ANY WRONG
TURNS.*













ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?



I'M FINE.



AKITO...

I WISH
I COULD
HAVE LIVED...

...IN A
KIND
WORLD.



I'M...

...FINE.



WITHOUT
FEAR.

WITHOUT
ANXIETY.



I WISH
I COULD HAVE
FOLLOWED...

...THE
SHORTEST
PATH...



WITHOUT
BEING HURT
MYSELF.



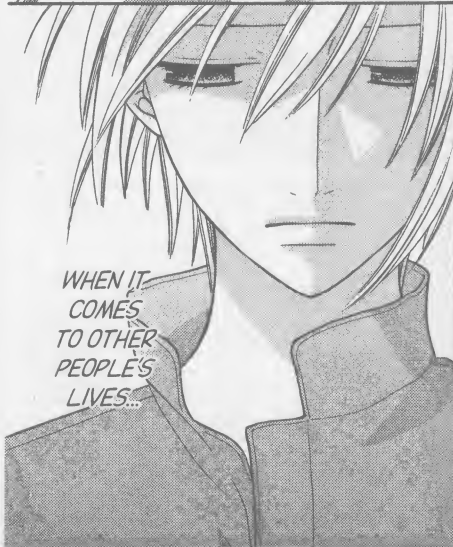
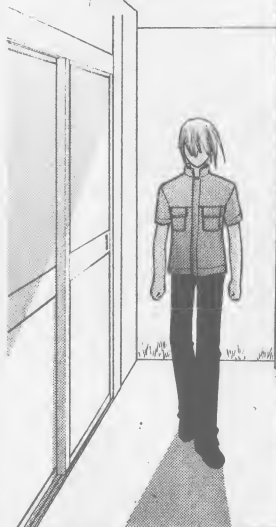
WITHOUT HURTING
OTHER PEOPLE.



ONLY DOING
THE RIGHT
THINGS.

"THAT'S
WRONG."

"THAT'S
STUPID."



WHEN IT
COMES
TO OTHER
PEOPLE'S
LIVES...

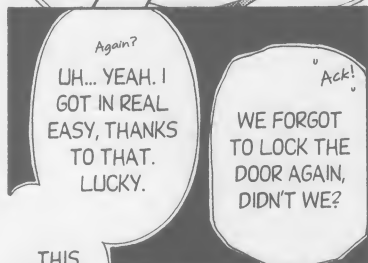
...TO THE
KIND WORLD
I WISH FOR.





...YOU CAN SAY THAT KIND
OF IRRESPONSIBLE DRECK
AS MUCH AS YOU WANT.

WEL-
COME
HOME.



Again?

UH... YEAH. I
GOT IN REAL
EASY, THANKS
TO THAT.
LUCKY.

"Ack!"

WE FORGOT
TO LOCK THE
DOOR AGAIN,
DIDN'T WE?

THIS
HOUSE...



...IS PRETTY
LOOSE--

DON'T
BE
VULGAR.



HUH?

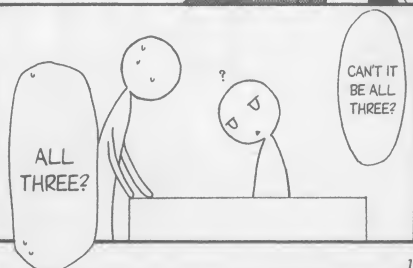
HARU...

WHA?

WEL-
COME
HOME.

Er...

I'M
HOME...





I ASKED
KYO, BUT HE
DIDN'T SAY
ANYTHING.

HOW'S
SHE
DOING?



Sigh...

I'M FINE.

BUT THE
REAL
REASON
I CAME
HERE...

...WAS TO
CHECK
ON YOU.

DID YOU GO
WITH HONDA-
SAN TO THE
HOSPITAL?



KYO HAS
HIS OWN...

...PAIN AND
CIRCUM-
STANCES.

WE ALL
KNOW
THAT.

BUT...



IS HE
UPSTAIRS
NOW?

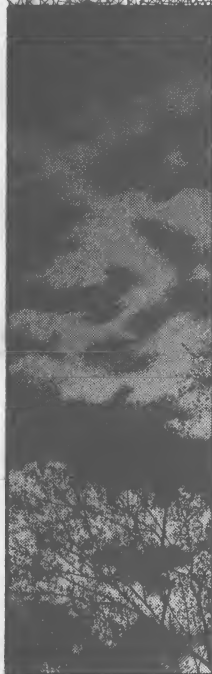
YEAH. HE
LOOKS LIKE
HIS SOUL
FLEW OUT
OF HIM,
THOUGH.

HE DIDN'T
GO WITH
HER, HUH?



NONE OF HIS
BAGGAGE IS
IMPORTANT
RIGHT NOW.

HAVE
FUN.



WHAT
THE
HECK
WAS
THAT?

WELCOME
HOME.



I'M HO--

...ER.



YOU.

WHY DIDN'T
YOU GO
TO THE
HOSPITAL?

IT'S NOT LIKE
YOU DON'T
HAVE PLENTY
OF TIME TO
WASTE.

YOU'RE
THE
WORST
PERSON
I KNOW.

Y'KNOW
SOME-
THING?

—
...



I CAN'T
PROTECT
HER.

SHE'S
BETTER
OFF...



...WITH
YOU.

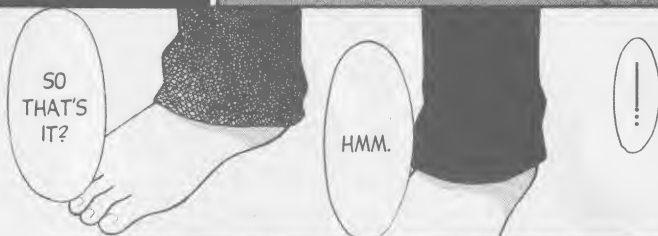


SAY WHAT
YOU WANT.

EVEN IF
I WAS
THERE...

...I'D
ONLY
HURT
HER.

...



SO
THAT'S
IT?

HMM.

!

ABOUT THAT.

WHAT AN
AWFUL THING.





*YOU SHOULD
GO LET HIM
HAVE IT.*



BAM!
THUD
THUD

UGH. THIS
IS WHY
I HATE
BOYS.

CAN I
ORDER A
PIZZA?

PIZZA
PIZZA
PIZZA

...

OW...!

YOU
CAN'T
PROTECT
HER?

...YOU
CAN'T
PROTECT
HER?!

WHAT
THE
HELL
DO YOU
MEAN...

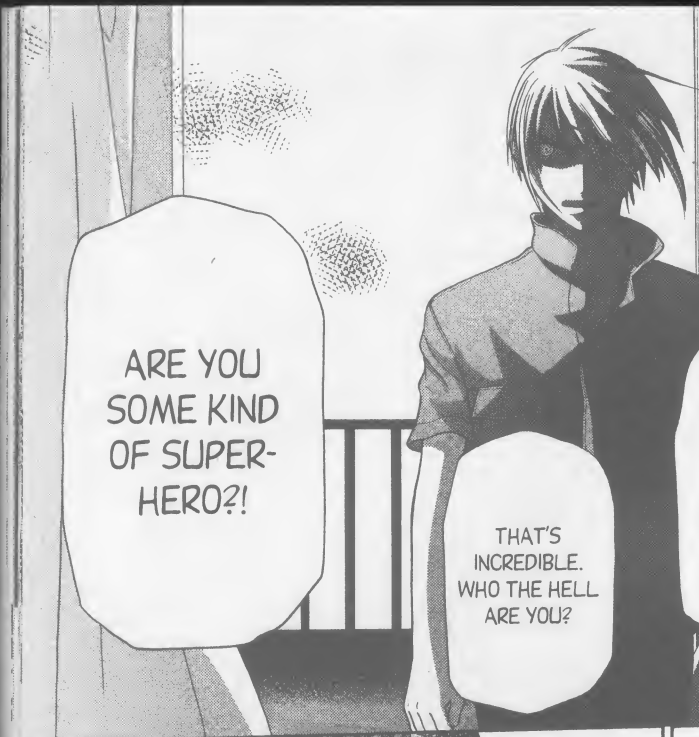
WAAAAA
みし
みし

KAPOW!

キャッ

パラ...






ARE YOU
SOME KIND
OF SUPER-
HERO?!

THAT'S
INCREDIBLE.
WHO THE HELL
ARE YOU?

YOU MEAN YOU
SHOULD'VE
BEEN ABLE TO
CATCH HER
WHEN SHE WAS
ABOUT TO FALL
OFF A CLIFF?

WOULD YOU
HAVE FELT
BETTER IF
YOU COULD'VE
RESCUED HER
WHEN SHE WAS
ABOUT TO BE
HIT BY A CAR OR
SOMETHING?




JUST SHUT UP,
DAMMIT! I NEVER
SAID I WANTED
ALL THAT!

I WISH I
COULD'VE
BEEN LIKE
THAT!

YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO'S SO
WONDERFUL!

SOMEONE
LIKE YOU!



YOU'RE
JUST A
STUPID
CAT!

SHUT
—



I WANTED...

**...TO BE
YOU!**



CUT
THE
CRAP,
KYO.

CAN I GET
NUGGETS,
TOO?

OH, FINE. GO
AT EACH
OTHER AS
MUCH AS
YOU WANT.



JUST
STOP!

STOP
SCREWING
AROUND!

STOP
SCREWING
AROUND!



I WANTED...

...TO BE...

...LIKE
YOU!

STOP--

...

YOU SON
OF A--

IT'S THE
SAME
FOR ME!



I...




SO HOW
CAN YOU
JUST...!

I
ASPIRED
TO BE
YOU.

I
ASPIRED
TO BE
YOU!

WHY?

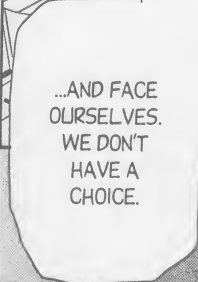
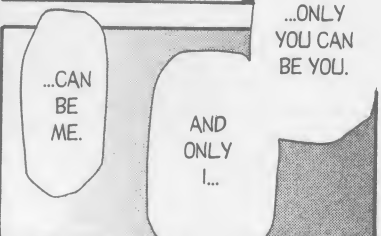
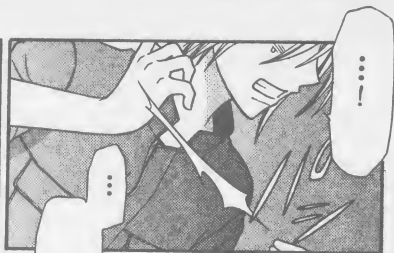
WHY ARE
YOU THE
FIRST ONE
TO SAY...




DON'T THROW
THAT CRAP AT
ME, YOU IDIOT!



STOP
SCREWING
AROUND!





YOU DON'T
HAVE TO BE
THAT STRONG.

WHEN
YOU'RE
WITH
HER...


OPEN
YOUR
EYES!

YOU
WERE!


...JUST
LOOK AT
HER!

YOU
MADE HER
LAUGH!

YOU
MADE HER
HAPPY!



SHE'S
ALWAYS
SMILING
AROUND YOU!



IT DOESN'T
HAVE TO
MEAN BEING A
SUPERHERO.

MAYBE IT
WAS ONLY
THE LITTLE
THINGS.



THERE
ARE SOME
THINGS
ON THIS
PLANET...

DO YOU
SERIOUSLY
THINK...

...THAT ONLY
YOU CAN DO.

I COULD
MAKE HER
LIKE THAT?

SO STOP
MAKING
HER CRY!

GET
YOUR ACT
TOGETHER!

I SWEAR,
YOU ARE
SO THICK!



SO LISTEN
TO ME, YOU
STUPID CAT.

WHAT ARE
YOU JUST
STANDING
AROUND
FOR?

YOU SAID YOU
WANTED TO BE LIKE
THE ALMIGHTY
ME, RIGHT?



TO
BE
YOI.

WANTED..

DAMMIT.

WE
FAIL.

WE
TRIP.

WE GET
LOST.

WE MAKE
MISTAKES.

AND LITTLE
BY LITTLE,
ONE STEP AT
A TIME...

...WE PUSH
FORWARD.

IT'S ALL WE
CAN DO.

...
WITHOUT
MAKING
ANY
WRONG
TURNS.

BUT THAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE.

A PATH
LIKE
THAT
DOESN'T
EXIST.

I HATE
HIM.

THAT
BASTARD.

I WISH...

...I COULD'VE LIVED
MY LIFE...



*EVEN IF WE
GET A LITTLE
BANGED UP.*



*ON OUR
OWN TWO
FEET.*

YUKI.

*YOU
OKAY?*



*WE'LL
REACH
SOMEONE.*



*SOMEDAY,
WE'LL REACH
SOMETHING.*

WE
PRAY.

I CALLED
THEM WHEN
I LEFT.

DID YOU
CALL
THE MAIN
HOUSE?

GOOD
THING.

SHE'S
AWAKE
NOW.

Y'KNOW
ABOUT
HONDA-
SAN?

BUT NORMAL
PEOPLE WOULD
REALIZE THAT,
WOULDN'T
THEY? HE'S JUST
UNBELIEVABLY
STUPID.

BY THE
WAY,
WHERE'S
KYO-KUN?
Lying around
upstairs?

AT THE
HOSPITAL,
I THINK.

REALLY?
BUT VISITING
HOURS ENDED
LONG AGO.

I HOPE UOTANI-
SAN AND
HANAJIMA-
SAN LET HIM
HAVE IT, TOO.

WONDERFUL....
NOW WE HAVE
A BLACK
YUKI-KUN.

Mwa
ha
ha.

WHO
CAN
SAY?

DIDJA KNOW
THAT WHEN
YOU SHOVED
HIM THERE?



I FELL
FOR IT!

AH,
CRAP.

NO, WAIT.
THAT'S
NOT...

THAT'S
RIGHT.

CALM
DOWN.

JUST...CALM
DOWN A
SECOND, KYO.

Visiting
hours
have

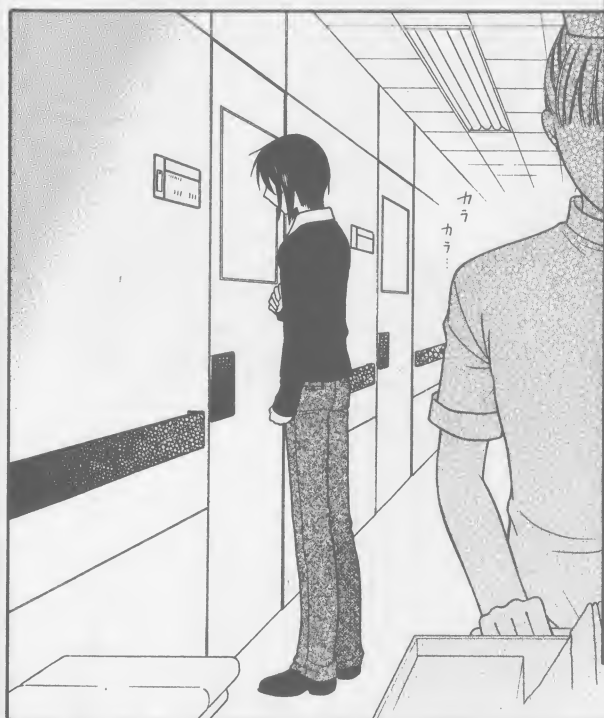
ended
for
today.

COME
ON.

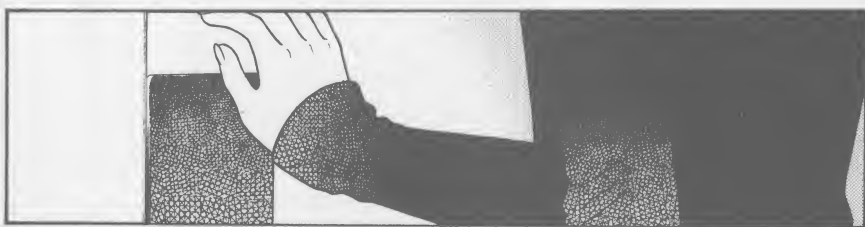
IT'S TIME
TO START
WALKING.

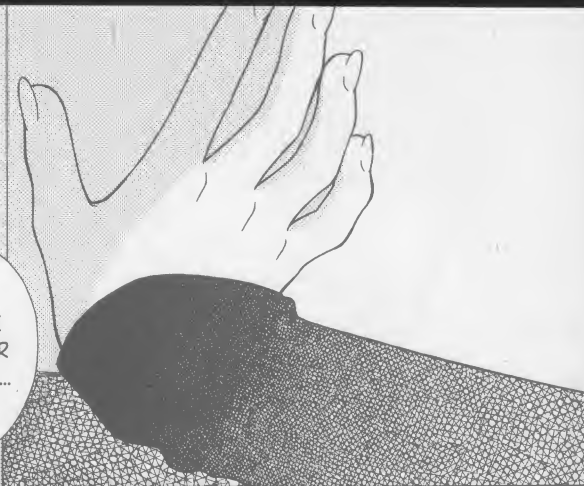
Chapter 124





KURENO SOHMA





...WAS
ALLOWED TO
VISIT HER FOR
A WHILE.

NO ONE
BUT HER
FAMILY...

I
GUESS.

HE SKIPPED
CLASS TO
VISIT HER?

I GUESS
THAT'S WHY
MOMIJI DIS-
APPEARED
THIS
AFTERNOON.

YEAH?

BUT
APPARENTLY
THEY'VE
FINISHED
ALMOST ALL
THE TESTS,
SO STARTING
TODAY, ANYONE
CAN SEE HER.

COOL..

HONDA-
SAN
WILL BE
WORRIED.

HER ROOM'S
SURE TO BE
FLOODED
WITH PEOPLE
RIGHT NOW.

YEAH.

STILL..

HM...



HOW VERY
KIND OF
HIM.

DID YOU
HEAR THAT,
ARISA?

IT SEEMS
THAT HE
TRULY DOES
WISH TO GO.

U...
K.O.O.L

I WANNA...
GO VISIT
HER AT THE
HOSPITAL.

CAN I GET
THROUGH?

"VISIT
HER"?

THAT
REALLY
CLEANS OUT
THE HEART,
DIDN'T IT,
HANAJIMA?

I'M
IMPRESSED.

I GUESS
WE HAD
HIM ALL
WRONG.

TEE
HEE
HEE...

HA
HA.


...
HEY.

AREN'T YOU
JUST FALLING
IN LOVE WITH
HIM DESPITE
YOURSELF?

COME NOW,
ARISA.

HEE
HEE.

IF YOU'VE
GOT
SOME-
THING
TO SAY,
JUST--



YOU'VE GOT SOME
NERVE THINKING
YOU CAN SEE
HER RIGHT NOW,
YOU STUPID, LUST-
FILLED CRETIN!

C'MERE SO
I CAN HANG
YOU UP, SWING
YOU AROUND,
AND SEND
YOU FLYING!

RAARGH!



HANAJIMA,
MY SPEAR!



SHH.

YOU
MUSTN'T,
ARISA.

whisper
whisper

SPEAR...?

BRING ME MY
SPEAR!

Kakeru



Huh? I haven't written about Kakeru yet, have I...?

- He lives alone with his mother.
- He loves Komaki.
- When I drew Komaki holding meat in Chapter 112, it was decided that she's a meat lover.
- Because both of their mothers are rarely at home because of work, they practically live together.
- The landlord of their apartment is super scary.
- He's popular in the shopping district.
- That's something I couldn't draw about...
- Please continue to be a good comrade and evil friend to Yuki for the rest of his life.
- He has such an important role, but I don't pay much attention to his needs when I draw him. Even if I let him run around freely, he's a good boy who won't digress too much, so I can relax. (laugh)

SHE'S
SERIOUS.



YOU'LL
LEAVE
PHYSICAL
EVIDENCE.

BUT
THAT'S
NOT EVEN
THE
PROBLEM
HERE!



I'M JUST
GLAD IT
WASN'T
SERIOUS.



DAM-
MIT.

POOR TOHRU
GETTING ALL
SCRATCHED
UP LIKE
THAT.



..YEAH.

I
KNOW.



DO YOU
NOW.

WOULD SOMEONE
WHO KNOWS LOOK
HER IN THE FACE
AND SAY "I'M
DISILLUSIONED"?!

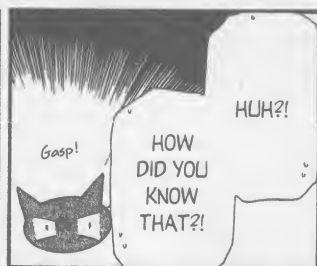
?!
?



...I
TOLD
THEM.

OH,
RIGHT.

I GUESS...



HUH?!

HOW
DID YOU
KNOW
THAT?!





HEY!

.....!

FORGIVE
ME?

SORRY,
FRIEND.

I HAD NO
IDEA IT
WOULD
INCLUR THIS
MUCH
WRATH.



SIMPLY
APOLOGIZING
WITHOUT A
THOUGHT
WOULD BE
NOTHING BUT
A NUISANCE.

THERE
WOULD BE
NO MEANING
IN SUCH
AN ACT.

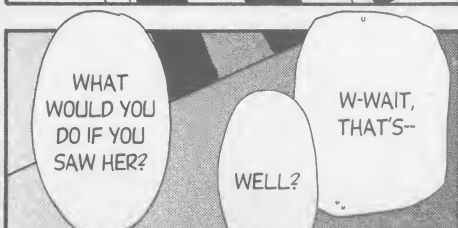
BECAUSE
TOHRU-
KUN...



YOU CAN'T
VISIT
TOHRU.

YOU'RE
FORBIDDEN.
GOT IT?

WHA?!



WHAT
WOULD YOU
DO IF YOU
SAW HER?

W-WAIT,
THAT'S--

WELL?



...THERE
ARE OTHER
THINGS
YOU
SHOULD
BE DOING.

...DOESN'T
BLAME
YOU.

THINK.

AREN'T
THERE?

IS THAT
WHAT TOHRU-
KUN WOULD
WANT?

IF...

...YOU
TRULY ARE
SORRY...

IT'S...



OH,
THAT'S A
GOOD
IDEA.

YOU
COULD
BE SINGING
YOUR
SWAN SONG.

Ah
ha
ha
ha.

I GET
IT.
YOU'RE
MAD
AT ME.

Tee
hee
hee
hee
hee.



...
OKAY.



...
YOU'RE-
RIGHT.

BUT
...

THERE
ARE
OTHER
THINGS.



I'VE
GOT A
LOT OF
STUFF
TO SORT
OUT.

FOR
EXAM-
PLE.



IT'S ABOUT
DAMN
TIME!

OW!

UMM...

...AND BE
A MAN
ALREADY.

JUST
HURRY
UP...





I KNOW.



!!

ARE YOU
GONNA
LISTEN
TO
THEM...

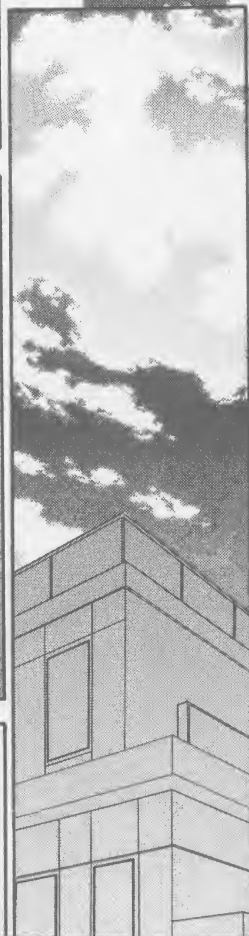
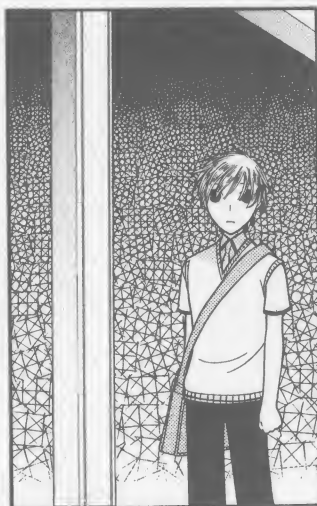
...AND
NOT
GO SEE
HER?

MAN,
KYO.



YOU
ARE
DUMB.

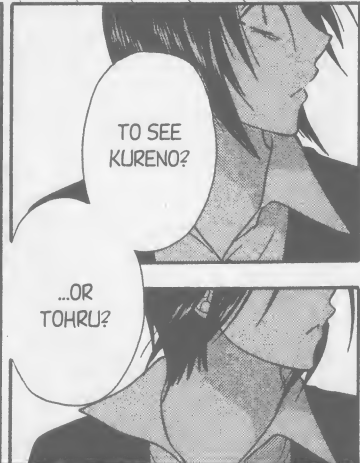






DID YOU
COME BY
YOURSELF?

ARE YOU
HERE TO
VISIT?



TO SEE
KURENO?

...OR
TOHRU?



...THAT A LOT
HAPPENED...

...AFTER
THAT.



AKITO.



THEY'RE
BOTH
OKAY.

THAT'S
WHAT'S
IMPORTANT.



I HEARD...



HE
COULD'VE...

HE
COULD'VE
BLAMED
ME!

ARE YOU
ALL RIGHT?

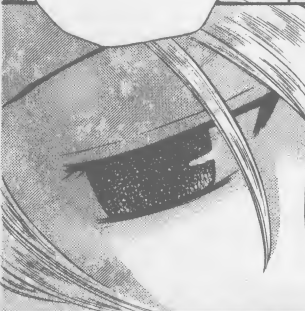


WHY
DIDN'T
HE?

HE
COULD'VE
...

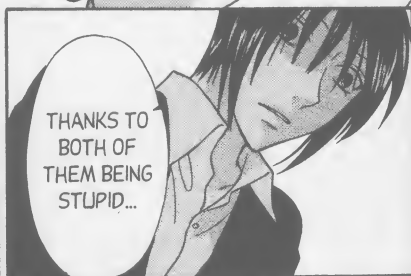
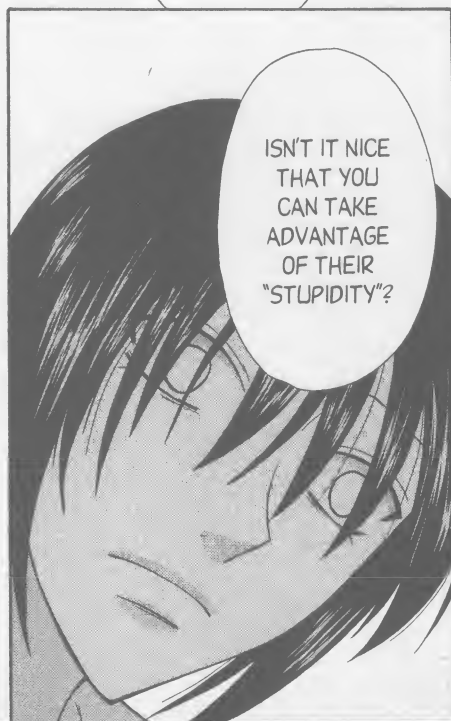


...GOTTEN
MORE ANGRY,
OR ACCUSED
ME.



IS HE
STUPID...?





I WONDERED
WHAT
KURENO
WOULD DO...

...IF I TOLD
HIM I WASN'T
OKAY.



WOULD
HE COME
BACK TO
ME?

WOULD HE
COME OVER
TO MY SIDE
AGAIN?



WHY
ARE YOU
CRYING?

I...



PROBABLY.

I THINK THAT'S
THE KIND OF
PERSON...

THAT'S WHAT IT
SEEMED LIKE.

...KURENO
JUST IS.

HE'S SO
INDULGENT.

I THINK
...

HE'S SO
KIND.

AND...

...FOR A
LONG
TIME...

I WAS
JUST...

...KIND.





...KILLING
HIM.

I HATE
THIS...!

I'M
SORRY!

I HATE
MYSELF.

I'M
SORRY.

I
HATE
IT!

I...



WHY COULDN'T
I DO ANYTHING
BUT HURT HIM?

OKAY.



I'M
SORRY...!

I CAN'T
UNDO
WHAT
I DID.

MY
APOLOGY
DOESN'T
MEAN
ANYTHING.

STILL.

HE
LISTENS...

...AND
ACCEPTS
IT.





IT'S
LIKE...

"THE MOST
FOOLISH
TRAVELER."

...

IT'S A
STORY.



I'LL
BET...

ONCE
YOU
HEAR
IT...




WANNA
HEAR IT?



...YOU'LL
WANNA RUN
TO GO SEE
TOHRU.



WOW.



AKITO REALLY
DID GO TO THE
HOSPITAL BY
HIMSELF.

HE'S MADE
PROGRESS.
MAYBE HE
GOT ALL THE
VIOLENCE
OUT OF HIS
SYSTEM.



.....
SOMETHING
HAPPENED
WITH
HONDA-
KUN, TOO.
DIDN'T IT?



SEEMS
LIKE.

H.M.



OR ABOVE ME
OR ANYTHING.

BUT NOT...

...FAR AWAY.

Tohru Honda



SHE
WAS JUST...
CLOSE BY.



NEXT
TO ME.

...SHE
SAT DOWN.





SHE TALKED
TO ME.

SHE
TOLD
ME...



...THAT
I WAS
THERE.



HUH?

OH...
YEAH.



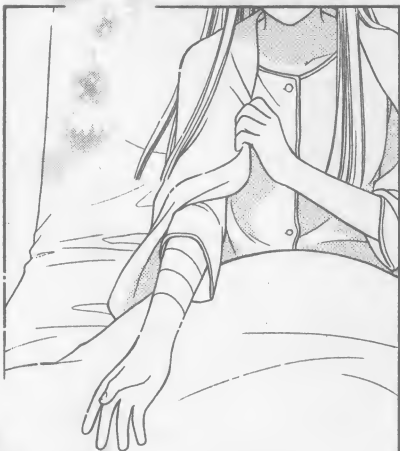
HMM.



DID
EVERYTHING
GO THE
WAY YOU
PLANNED?



I'VE MADE
PROGRESS,
YOU KNOW?



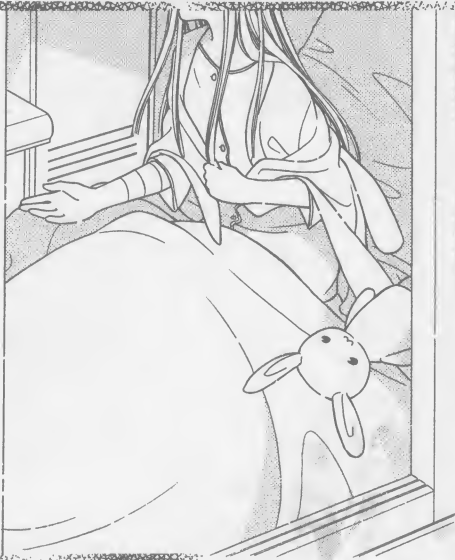
ACTUALLY,
I'M FEELING
A LITTLE
BAD.

ABOUT A
NUMBER
OF
THINGS.

...A
LITTLE?

NO, NO,
HAA-SAN. I
GUESS YOU
COULD SAY...

I'VE
LEARNED TO
COMPROMISE
A LITTLE
MYSELF.



Chapter 125





HEY,
YUN-YUN!

I HEAR
HONDA-
SAN'S
IN THE
HOSPITAL.

THAT
TRUE?

YESTERDAY I
HEARD FROM SOME
GUYS IN MY CLASS
THAT THE ORANGE
STUD WAS BEING
BLAMED FOR IT.

*By Honda-san's
little gang.*

HM?

WHERE
DID YOU
HEAR
THAT?

WOW, YUN-
YUN. THAT
SMILE'S
DARK AS
HELL.

HEH.

OH...
THAT.

Machi



Machi's mentality is easy to draw.

- With her father, mother, and little brother, Machi's in a family of four.
- She currently lives alone.
- She's still avoiding her family's house, so you can count the number of times she's gone home.
- Her room's considerably less dirty these days.
- She's in the same class as Momiiji and Haru. They'll probably become friends eventually.
- She'd been putting a set distance between herself and Kakeru, so they still have their awkward moments, but maybe that'll change through Yuki, too?
- But it's still looking like she'll never call Kakeru "Onii-chan."
- She may be constantly thrown into a panic by the unexpectedly (?) pushy Yuki. (laugh)





YOU'RE
SCARY!
AND
MEAN!

LET
GO!

ANYWAY,
I'M NOT
"BOTTLING
UP" ANY-
THING.

ACTUALLY
...



I'M GOING
TO PUNCH
YOU INTO
THE SUN.



WHAT'S
WRONG?
ARE YOU
BOTTLING
SOME-
THING UP?

YOU
WANNA
CRY IN MY
MANLY
BOSOM?



...I WASN'T
HOLDING
IN AS
MUCH AS
I THOUGHT.



...
I'M A
LITTLE
...

SO
TO BE
HONEST
...

AND I
WASN'T DE-
PRESSED.



LIKE
KAKERU.

HE'S
ONE OF
THEM.



AND...



I HAD
THE SUP-
PORT OF
OTHER
PEOPLE.

IT
WASN'T
THROUGH
MY
POWER
ALONE.

IF IT
DID...

...PROUD OF
MYSELF.

I STILL
HAVE THE
SAME
WEAK-
NESSES I
ALWAYS
DID.

BUT
STILL.

I WONDER
IF SOME-
THING WAS
FINALLY
ABLE TO
CHANGE.



KIMI'S BEEN
WONDERING
FOR A
LOOONG
TIME NOW.

WHAT'S
YUN-YUN'S
RELATION-
SHIP WITH
THIS "HONDA"
GIRL?

HUH?

HMM?



OH,
C'MON.

YUN-YUN,
KAKERU'S
GROSSING
ME OUT!

THAT'S
NOT
FUNNY,
KAKERU!

WHAAAA?

SHE'S
HIS
MAMA.

In his heart.

Pff!



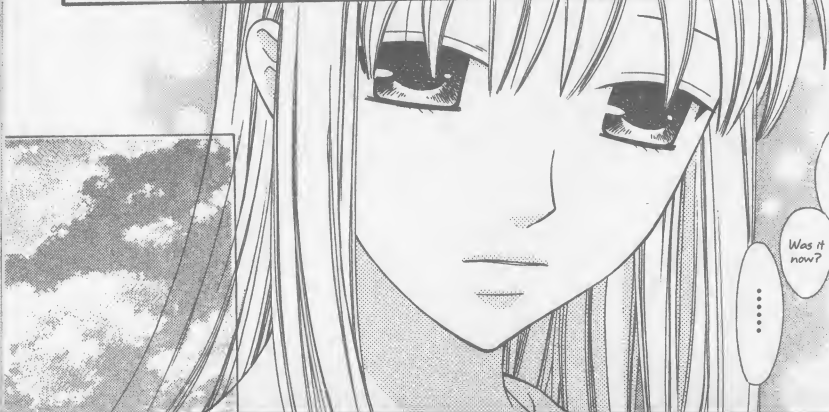
THAT
DOESN'T
MAKE
SENSE!



Stop
your
yap-
ping.

YOU'RE
STARTING
TO PISS
ME OFF.

SHE
PROTECTED
LITTLE YUN-
YUN WHEN
HE WAS
WEAK AS A
BABY DEER.



Kid-
ding!
That
was a
little
joke.

Was it
now?

.....



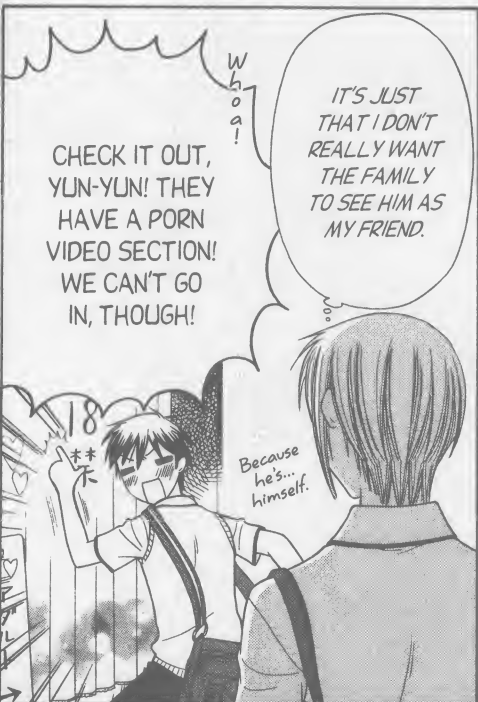
I'VE DECIDED
THAT WHEN
I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO GIVE
SOMEONE, I'LL
JUST GIVE 'EM
SOMETHING
I'D LIKE.

LET
ALONE
ROCK
ONES.

DOES HONDA-
SAN EVEN
LISTEN TO
CDS?

I FINALLY
FOUND THE
PERFECT GET-
WELL GIFT.

WOO!



CHECK IT OUT,
YUN-YUN! THEY
HAVE A PORN
VIDEO SECTION!
WE CAN'T GO
IN, THOUGH!

IT'S JUST
THAT I DON'T
REALLY WANT
THE FAMILY
TO SEE HIM AS
MY FRIEND.

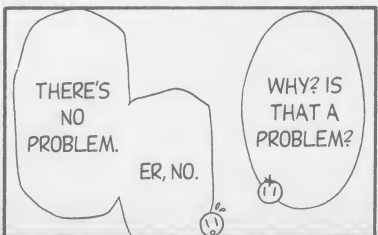
Because
he's...
himself.



...ARE YOU
REALLY
GOING TO
SEE HER?

YUP.

KOMAKI
WANTS ME
TO, TOO.



THERE'S
NO
PROBLEM.

ER, NO.

WHY? IS
THAT A
PROBLEM?





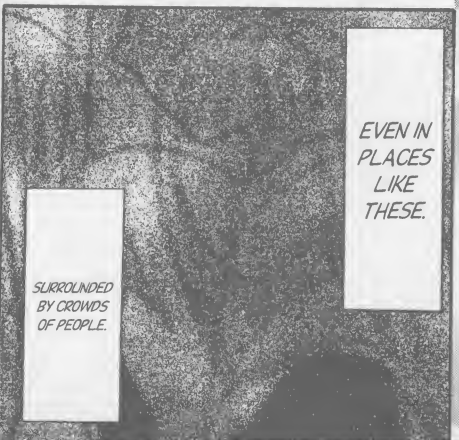
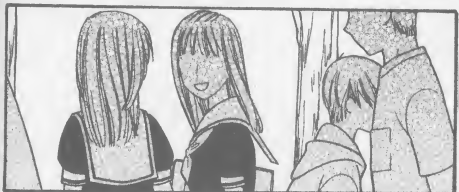
AND
SUPPORT-
TING ME.

FOR THAT
REASON...

...I WANT
TO BE
SOMEONE...



...WHO CAN
STAND UP
TO HIS OWN
WEAKNESS.



SURROUNDED
BY CROWDS
OF PEOPLE.

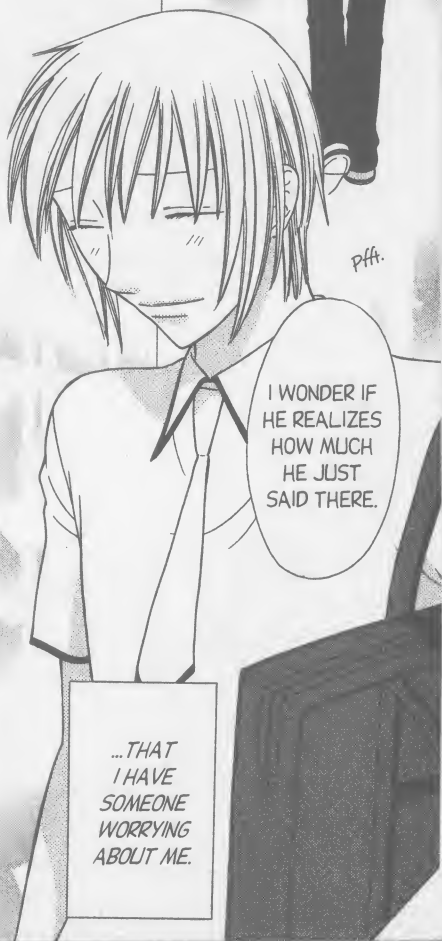
EVEN IN
PLACES
LIKE
THESE.

BUT I'M
STILL
THANKFUL...



.....

pff.



I WONDER IF
HE REALIZES
HOW MUCH
HE JUST
SAID THERE.

...THAT
I HAVE
SOMEONE
WORRYING
ABOUT ME.



...ONCE
UPON A
TIME.

I USED TO
MULL OVER
THAT KIND
OF THING
CONSTANTLY...

CROWDS
USED TO
MAKE ME
WONDER.

HOW MANY
PEOPLE
WOULD
NOTICE IF I
DISAP-
PEARED?



WELCOME!

UM,
EXCUSE
ME.

IS THAT
THING
OVER
THERE...
REAL?

HM?



カラッ
カラッ...



BUT
NOW...



...I'M A
LITTLE
DIFFERENT.



THEN
I'LL
TAKE IT!
PLEASE!

Just a
second.

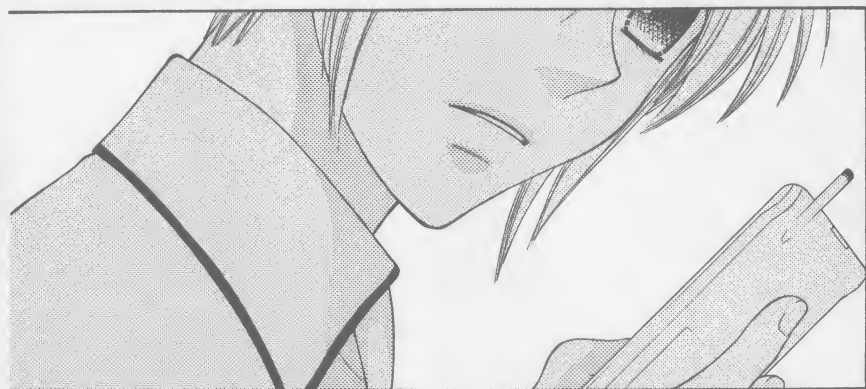
SURE.

THANKS!!

EXCUSE
ME FOR
A...



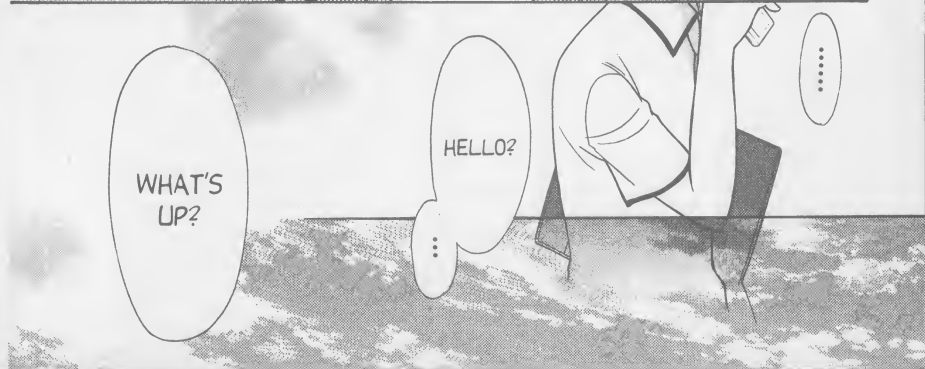
OF
COURSE
IT IS.



WHAT'S
UP?

HELLO?

...



EVEN IF IT'S
JUST ONE
PERSON.

THAT'S
ENOUGH.

I'M SORRY...
TO CALL
YOU SO
SUDDENLY.

ER.

...HAVE
SOME-
THING.

TO
GIVE
YOU.

OH.

U H...

MACHI.

IT'S
NOT
LIKE
THAT.

IT
DOESN'T
HAVE
TO BE...

...A LOT OF
PEOPLE.

I...

BECAUSE
THEN...

...IT CAN'T
BE ZERO.

...TO GIVE
YOU, TOO,
MACHI!

HAVING
ONE
PERSON...

...IS AN
INCREDI-
BLE
THING.

HUH?

MACHI...

WHERE
ARE YOU
RIGHT
NOW?

ONE
STATION
FROM
THE
SCHOOL.
I mean...

CAN
YOU
STAY
PUT?

I'M
COMING
THERE
NOW.

I HAVE
SOME-
THING...

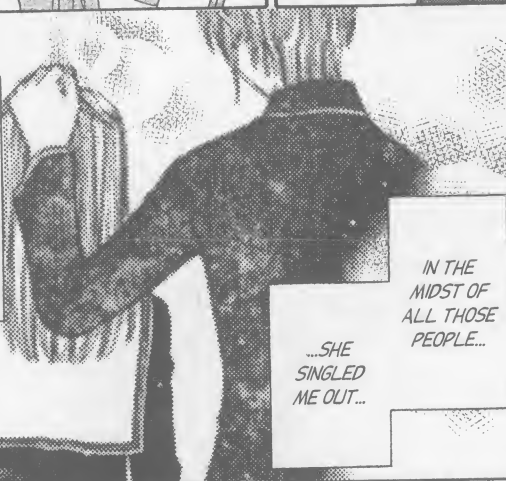


I WAS
HAPPY.

I WAS
HAPPY
THEN,
TOO.



...AND
FOUND
ME.



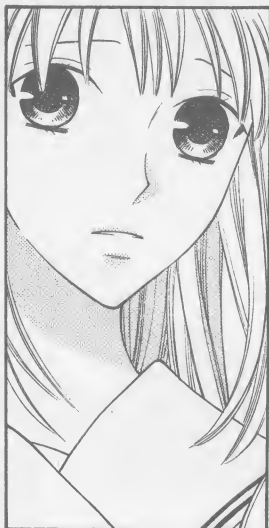
I WAS SO
HAPPY, IT
TICKLED.

IN THE
MIDST OF
ALL THOSE
PEOPLE...

...SHE
SINGLED
ME OUT...



AND IT'S
THE SAME
THING
NOW.



YOU CAN'T
TAKE THAT
FOR GRANTED.



HAVING
SOMEONE
OTHER THAN
YOURSELF...

...THINK-
ING OF
YOU!

LOOK-
ING...

...FOR
YOU!

IT'S A
MIRACULOUS...

...AND
BLESSED
THING.

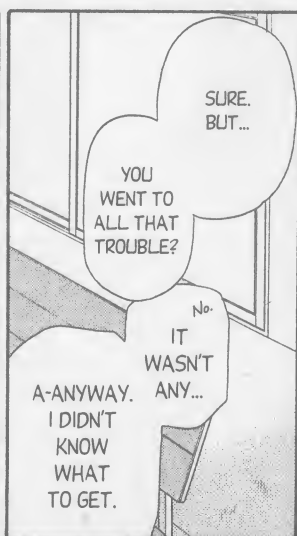
I
JUST...

LIKE,
UNTIL
TOMOR-
ROW.

I WASN'T
SURE IF I
SHOULD
WAIT.

SORRY TO...
TROUBLE
YOU.

UM...







THAT'S
WHAT YOU
MEANT BY
"FRESH."

DON'T
WORRY-
IT'LL BE
FINE.

HUH?

It works really well, but if you
don't use it fast, it might lose
its freshness. Ah ha ha.

Yes,
sir.

At the
store?

Was
he
teasing
me?

THANK
YOU.

I LOVE
IT.

HONEST.

YOU SAID
SOMETHING
ABOUT THAT
BEFORE.

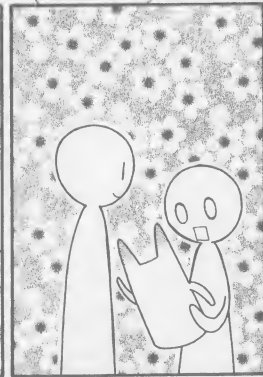
THAT YOU
WANTED
SOME.

SO...

I'LL
BET...

...IT WAS
HEAVY.

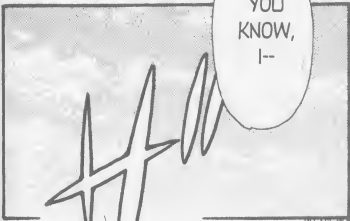
I GET IT.





HEY.

MACHI.



YOU
KNOW,
I--



THANK...

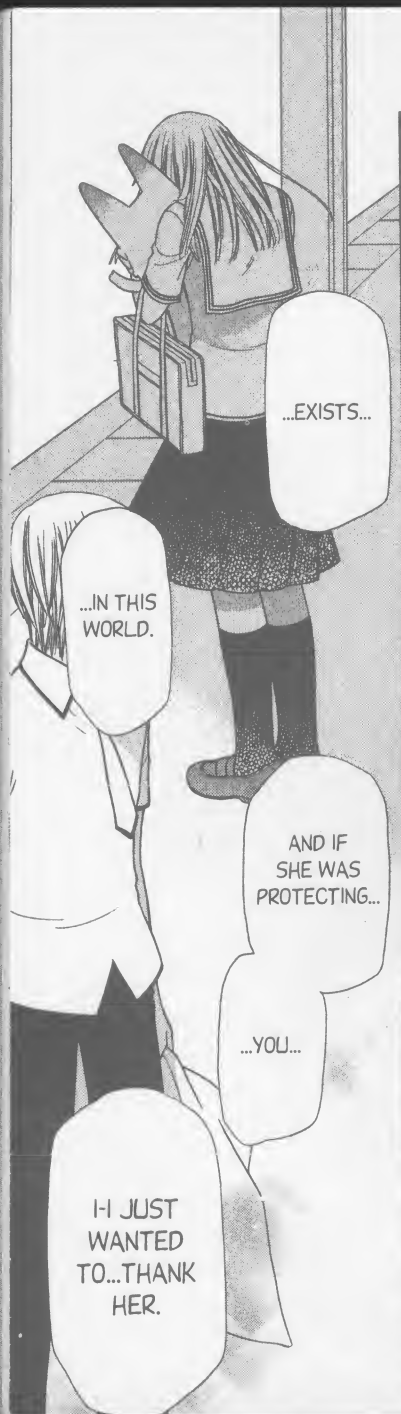
...YOU.



ACK!

WAIT,
WAIT!

JUST
A...



...IN THIS
WORLD.

...EXISTS...

AND IF
SHE WAS
PROTECTING...

...YOU...

I JUST
WANTED
TO...THANK
HER.



I KNOW
WE DON'T
HAVE A
RELATION-
SHIP OR
ANYTHING.

AND I'M
PROBABLY
BUTTING IN.

BUT...

I'M REALLY
HAPPY...

THAT
SOMEONE
LIKE
YOU...



I...

WANTED
...

...TO
THANK
HER.

HONDA-
SENPAI.

I MEAN.



I'M HAPPY.

REALLY.



I THINK...



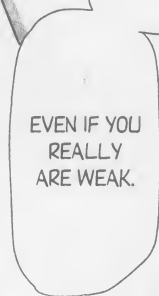
I THINK
IT'S
BECAUSE
YOU'RE
LIKE
THAT...



...
THAT
YOU
NOTICED
...



PRESIDENT.



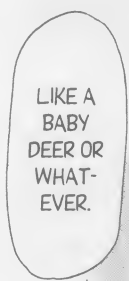
EVEN IF YOU
REALLY
ARE WEAK.



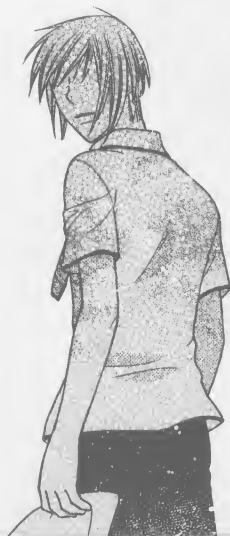
...SOMEONE
LIKE ME.




AND
TALKED
TO ME.

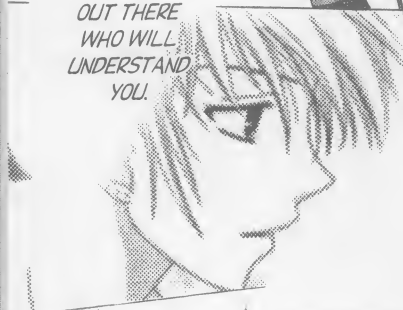


LIKE A
BABY
DEER OR
WHAT-
EVER.






...YOU'RE LIKE
THAT, YUKI...




...THAT I
KNOW THAT
THERE'S
SOMEONE
OUT THERE
WHO WILL
UNDERSTAND
YOU.

IT'S
BECAUSE...



AND SOME DAY,
YOU'LL FIND
EACH OTHER.



I'M SO GLAD
YOU WERE
THERE FOR
ME...!



RIGHT.

AND HERE
SHE IS.

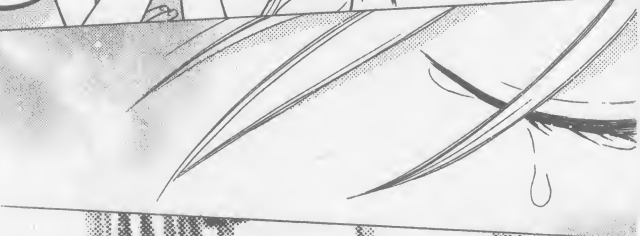




THANK
YOU...



...FOR
FINDING
ME.



I THINK
THAT THE
WEAKNESS...



...AND THE
KINDNESS...



...ARE
VERY...



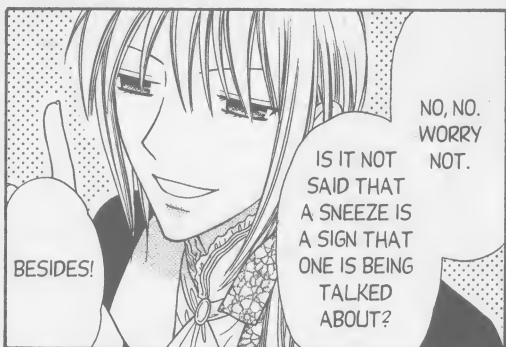
...THAT
YOU HAVE...



WE'RE IN A
HOSPITAL--
WANNA
GET THAT
CHECKED?

WHAT IS
IT, COM-
MANDER?
CAUGHT
A COLD?

...PRECIOUS.



BESIDES!

IS IT NOT
SAID THAT
A SNEEZE IS
A SIGN THAT
ONE IS BEING
TALKED
ABOUT?

NO, NO.
WORRY
NOT.



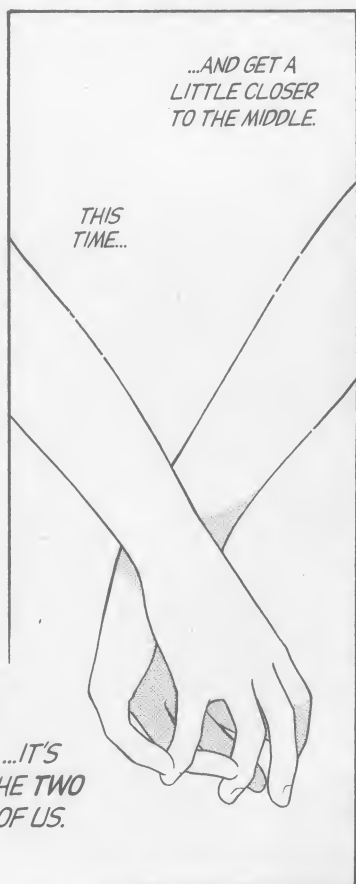
ACHOO!



HEY, WHAT
DO YOU
EAT TO GET
THAT GOOD-
LOOKING?

YOU SHOULD
GET YOUR
HEAD
PROPERLY
EXAMINED
AT LEAST
ONCE.

I WILL TRUST
MY BODY TO
NONE BUT
TORI-SAN!





AND
THAT...

...IS A BLESSING
AND A
MIRACLE.

To Be Continued in Volume 22

I feel so grateful!

*Harada-sama, Araki-sama,
Mother-sama, Editor-sama...*

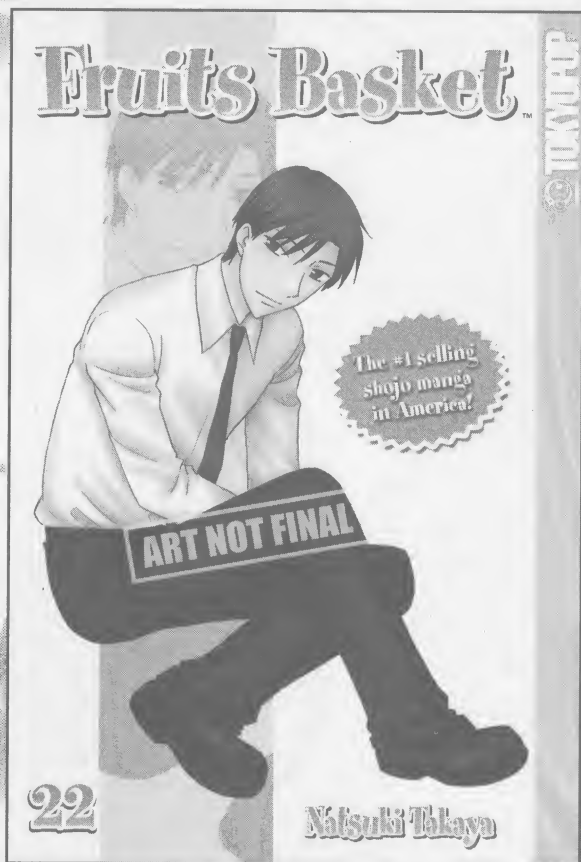
*And everyone who reads
and supports this manga.*

Papa...!

This has been Natsuki Takaya.



Next time in...



Crumbling Curse

Kyo finally makes the decision to stop running from his fears and confront his birth father. But how will he react to his father's pressure to accept an unwanted truth? Meanwhile, as Akito's control over the Sohma family slips away, will the last vestiges of her sanity and reason slip away as well?

Fruits Basket Volume 22
Available March 2009

Fans Basket

Welcome to another edition of Fans Basket! I'm taking over as editor for the series and the amount of mail we continue to get for Fruits Basket amazes me! Thanks so much to everyone for supporting Fruits Basket so strongly! Helping out for this section is our super awesome intern from upstate New York, Kaitlin Gallup! She worked very hard to sift through boxes of fan mail to pick out some great entries. Enjoy!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Paul Morrissey, the longtime editor of Fruits Basket. Paul did an amazing job on the last dozen volumes of the series and he will be greatly missed. Matching his level of excellence will be a major challenge for us all. Thanks so much, Paul!

- Alexis Kirsch, Editor



Catherine Schweitzer
Age 14
Tacoma, WA

All I could think of was "how cute!" I guess this answers your questions about your stickers, Catherine! Your artwork was great, but I just fell in love with the stickers, especially Momiji as a rabbit! Keep up the creativity and the good work!